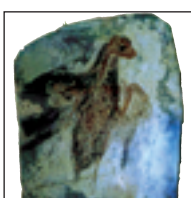


The China Geology Museum has over 12,000 geological specimens.

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Eating ice cream is one of the most pleasurable ways to keep cool in summer.

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SARS has made national heroes of the medical staff who are risking their lives to treat sufferers.

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BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY MAY 9 2003

NO. 103

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM

State Council Pushes SARS Control and Economic Growth

A meeting of the State Council Standing Committee presided over by Premier Wen Jiabao Wednesday discussed measures proposed by the State Development and Reform Commission to maintain national economic development in the midst of the on-going fight against severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

According to Xinhua News Agency, the meeting focused on the big challenges China continues to face in the battle against SARS, the impact of the epidemic on the national economy and the increasing burdens it is placing on economic development efforts.

The meeting called for efforts to prevent and control SARS on one hand and to stress the central work of economic construction on the other, in order to maintain steady economic growth and minimize the losses generated by the highly contagious disease.

Happy Nurses Day!

To make it easier to maintain a high standard of hygiene inside the epidemic ward, doctors and nurses from Beijing Haidian Hospital all agreed to cut their hair short before heading to the front line to treat

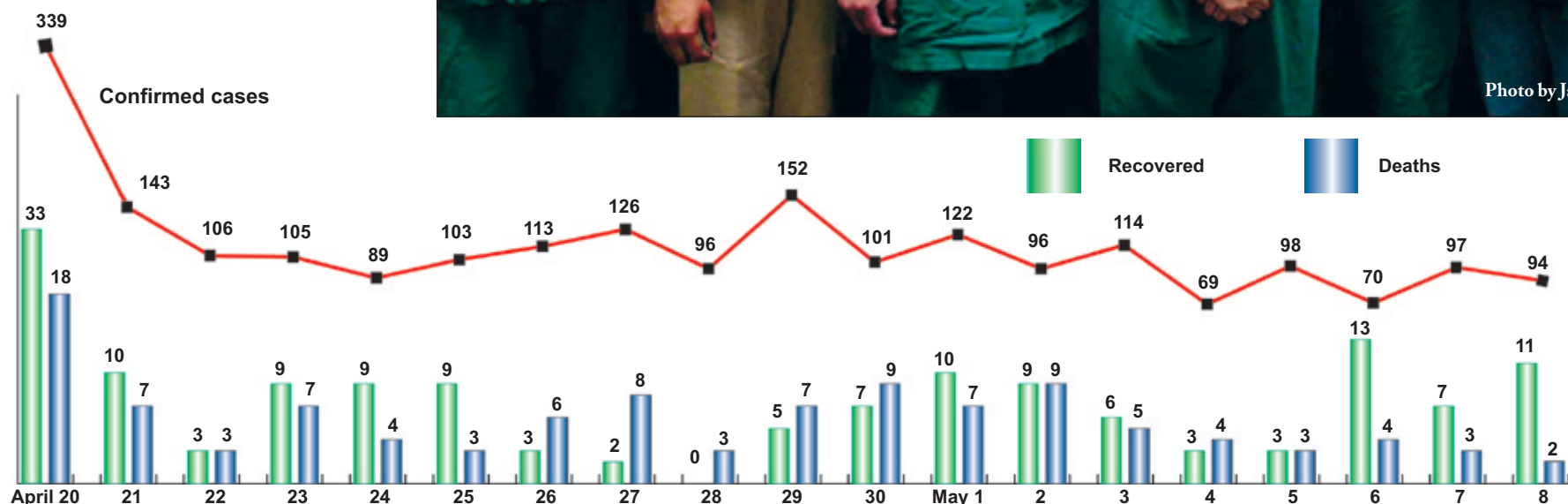
SARS patients on May 4.

Meanwhile, International Nurses Day falls on May 12, marking the anniversary of the birth of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale. The theme for International Nurses Day

this year is "Fighting AIDS Stigma, Caring for All." But now there is also another battle front — the fight against SARS. (By Chen Ying)



Photo by Jackey



The course of SARS in Beijing since April 20. The total number of confirmed cases in Beijing as of Thursday was 2,136.

Source: Ministry of Health

Chart by Shi Jing / Chen Ying

A Jewel among Volunteers

By Chen Ying

A millionaire jeweler is in the spotlight in Beijing, not for her success as a business woman, but for her role in the fight against SARS.

Wang Lan has a happy family; a husband who loves her deeply and a seven-year-old son. She started her own jewelry business in 1993, which now has outlets all around the country. Since April 29 she has been working as a volunteer at Beijing You'an Hospital, one of the designated hospitals treating SARS patients.

Wang insists that the name of her company not be published. "I have many ways to promote my company, but this is absolutely not one of them!" she said.

A natural decision

Ma Jian, Wang's husband, is a doctor at No. 304 People's Liberation Army Hospital. On April 18, the hospital called for medical staff to go to Xiaotangshan, where the government has set up a new hospital specially to treat SARS patients. Ma signed up to go the same day.

On hearing the news, Wang also made up her mind to offer her services as a volunteer. "There are few customers at my jewelry counters in the

department stores, since most people are staying home because of SARS," she said.

"It's natural for my wife to make such a decision," said Ma. "She is the kind of person who always wants to help others." Though the hospital supervisors expressed appreciation for her courage, they said it would be improper to enlist her, as she had no medical qualifications.

But Wang did not want to be a spectator. After hearing that some staff in Ditan Hospital had quit in fear of SARS, Wang thought she should do something. "It's my chance. That's what I want to do," she told her husband. Then she started phoning hospitals.

Later the same day, You'an Hospital informed her that she could start working there the next day and that they would pay her 50 yuan a day. Wang was so excited, "But I don't want the money." She will stay at the hospital for a month as a volunteer.

Workaholic

When a 30-member medical team from Huagong Hospital came to assist You'an staff, the hospital arranged for Wang to look after the newcomers, doing chores for them and sanitizing

their dormitories.

Ma said his wife is really a workaholic, saying she phoned him late on April 29 to say she had kept busy during her first day at the hospital.

"She couldn't sleep that night she had been working so hard," Ma said. Wang did the same job for five days until the hospital decided to use those rooms as a ward for more SARS patients.

She went to the hospital's sterilization department after hearing it was short of staff. There she met Yu Liancong, the department director.

"She is the epitome of an ideal hospital worker," said Wang. Yu and her staff were responsible for maintaining a sterile environment in the hospital. "The doctors and nurses in the front line may have a short break each month, so they don't become totally exhausted. But Yu hasn't rested even for one day since the hospital started accepting SARS patients," Wang said, "But she never complains."

"I can still smell the pungent odor of the disinfectant and my eyes really sting, even though I have been wearing a mask and protective glasses," she said.

(Continued on page 2)

Beijing Reports 94 New Cases

From 10 am May 7 to 10 am May 8, Beijing reported 94 new SARS cases and two deaths from the disease, China's Ministry of Health announced yesterday.

The Chinese mainland reported a total of 146 new SARS cases and five new deaths.

The cumulative SARS cases on the Chinese mainland rose to 4,698 and 224 had died as of 10 am on Thursday, said the ministry.

(Xinhua)

Website Provides SARS Info

The Beijing Foreign Affairs Office is publishing daily updated information on SARS on its website www.bjfa.gov.cn. The information, available in Chinese and English, covers new measures taken by the municipal government, the latest numbers of confirmed and suspect cases, locations of sites under quarantine and question and answer forums.

The information posted is also available as a daily email briefing to embassies, consulates, international organizations, chambers of commerce and foreign press agencies in Beijing.

More SARS Coverage

■ **Rallying to the SARS cause** *Page 2*

■ **Feeding the front line** *Page 3*

■ **Officials punished in SARS cases** *Page 4*

■ **Debate over race to patient virus** *Page 5*

■ **Capital commerce under pressure** *Page 6*

■ **Winners and losers** *Page 6*

■ **Know your disinfectant** *Page 7*

Release from Quarantine

By Su Wei

At four o'clock yesterday afternoon, around 40 families in Building 29 at Zaojunmiao Dongli, Haidian came out of quarantine. The building was isolated two weeks ago after over a dozen SARS cases were reported there.

Zhou Dihua, 74, a resident of the building, says she plans to go travelling. "I have a friend in Hubei. Before we were quarantined, he invited me to visit, but I didn't go," she said. "Later, he called me, saying if I had accepted his invitation, I might have escaped being quarantined."

Another resident, Meng Dafen, 68, says she will go to collect some mulberry leaves for the silk worms she raised for her granddaughter. "There is a mulberry tree 20 meters away around the corner."

Yang Manli, 51, director of information management at the Central University of Finance and Economics, says her biggest wish is simply to return to the university to have a look when the quarantine period ends.

"For the past two weeks, I have had no idea what is going on at the university," she said. "I think there must be a lot in my office for me to deal with."

Compared with quarantined residents, 44-year-old Zhang Qingxi, director of the Beixiaguan sub-district sanitation maintenance center, has a specific plan for Thursday night. "My wife will drive me home. I will have a hot bath and then go to sleep."

Half an hour after the people at building 29 Zaojunmiao Dongli came out of quarantine, students in dormitory buildings A, B and C at Beifang Jiaotong University, who were quarantined the same day, were released.

Zheng Changzhong, a freshman at the university, expressed relief that the quarantine was ending earlier than he expected. "I thought it would be over at midnight Thursday, but we are to be let out at 4:30 pm."

He says he would ask all his quarantined classmates to play basketball in "the big court of the university, not the half-size one in front of their apartment building."

"We six guys can be divided into two teams." For Gao Futing, vice chancellor of the university, release from quarantine means he will be able to sleep at home again. Gao says the focus of his work is now given to management of the residential area of the university. "I can say that the campus is comparatively safe. But in the past three and four days, we have found a few suspected SARS cases in the residential areas."

According to Gao, a team has been formed to keep records of suspected SARS cases in the university residential area. "Once they are detected with SARS they are to be quarantined," he said. "Members of the team are to provide daily services for the quarantined people, such as buying vegetables."

EDITOR: LI XIN DESIGNER: LI SHI

Traffic Flow Ensured Through Emergency Measures

China's Ministry of Construction issued an emergency circular Tuesday calling on urban transportation departments nationwide to adopt necessary measures to maintain regular public traffic flow in major cities.

The circular included stipulations that no department or individual can block urban traffic without authorization from provincial governments, and any individuals or groups that do so will be subject to serious punishment. Enterprises engaged in urban transportation were ordered not to halt or reduce services.

Moreover, the circular required related departments to strengthen sanitation, with subway and bus stations nationwide to undergo regular disinfection and necessary reconstruction in order to improve their sanitary conditions and ventilation.

Effective approaches should be taken at every subway entrance to prevent SARS victims from entering stations, stressed the circular. (Xinhua)

WHO Experts Arrive in Northern China

A World Health Organization (WHO) expert team arrived in Baoding, Hebei Province, Thursday morning.

The WHO experts are expected to inspect the designated hospitals for the SARS patients, visit rural areas of Baoding and talk with local medical workers.

According to the WHO official website, the team is to investigate Hebei's ability "to identify, report, contain, isolate and care for people with the disease, as well as contact tracing to detect potential SARS cases".

Besides Baoding, the expert team will also visit Shijiazhuang, the province's capital. (Xinhua)

TV Show Aids Home Study

By Ivy Zhang

Since this Tuesday, Zhang Zhi, a nine-year boy who attends the Beijing Caihefang Primary School, has had a good excuse for sitting in front of the television – he has been watching a program called *Telecourse* designed to help youngsters study at home.

Like other students his age, Zhang has been cooped up at home the past two weeks following the suspension of all public schools for fear of the spread of SARS on April 18.

"The show is helpful. I watched two math classes and one writing class today," said Zhang. "Though the two math classes were not really right for me, one was too hard and one too difficult, the writing class was pretty good, it focused on how to write through observation."

Last weekend, the Beijing government announced the further halt of all primary and high schools in the municipality for another two weeks.

Telecourse programs have been launched through TV, radio and Internet with the intention of helping students not fall behind despite the suspension of public education. Daily class content is published ahead of time in local newspapers and experienced teachers have been invited to give lectures and otherwise contribute to the programs.

Another venue for out-of-school education is the Beijing education network set up by the municipal education department at www.bjedu.gov.cn. Students can access this network to interact with their teachers and get assistance in their home study.

(Continued from page 1)
Just do it

"Some media says my actions represent the image of the good citizen," Wang said, but adds that this was not what she intended to do originally. "But now I think I should work harder for those people who really care about me."

"One reporter asked me whether I will quit this job if my business picks up. I said I would, because I'm the boss and my employees also need me," Wang said frankly. Her company employs more than 80 staff. "I just do what I want to do to help others."

"I'm not afraid of the disease. I think getting SARS is not so horrible, what frightens me is becoming ill psychologically," she said. "So few people are out in the streets now. It only took half an hour to get to the hospital from my home. Normally,



A happy family: Ma Jian, Ma Shixuan and Wang Lan.

it would take at least one hour to cover that distance. People should keep living their lives as usual."

The strength of an example

After Wang's story appeared in

the press, You'an Hospital received many calls from would-be volunteers. "Thanks so much to those ordinary people. But the hospital hopes they can find a safer place to serve as a volunteer," a spokeswoman said.

Those around Wang have also been touched by her courage. "My employees have sent mobile phone message to me, saying they are proud of me and will work harder," she said.

Ma Jian said his wife is very cautious about the disease. "But I support her action," adding that he was ready to look after her if she caught the disease herself. "Of course, I hope it never comes to that!"

"Trust me, I will work as hard as I can at the hospital, and I believe I will still be healthy one month from now," Wang said confidently.

Masses, Companies Rally to SARS Cause

By Sun Ming

Many regular Beijingers are no longer trying to hide from the SARS virus, they are doing what they can to join the fight. Wang Guangchao, 91, a retired professor from Beijing University's medical school, donated 20,000 yuan after he read an article in *Beijing Youth Daily* on Sunday reporting on hospitals' desperate need for more fans.

"While Beijing struggles under SARS, we should all do our part, big or small, to help medical workers try to control the situation," said Wang. "We might not be able to fight on the front lines, but we can make meaningful contributions."

The fans are needed in response to rising temperatures, which are making it difficult for medical personnel working in SARS wards to get by, seeing as all medical workers that have direct contact with SARS patients are required to wear airproof uniforms, protective head covers, masks, rubber gloves and goggles. Air conditioners cannot be turned on in hospitals for fear of spreading the virus, so medical personnel are left stewing in their own juices.

"Some doctors have passed out from heat exhaustion. One doctor, surnamed Ma, said some medical personnel have higher heart rates than their patients. Medical workers on the front lines need electrical fans," said the *Beijing Youth Daily* report on Sunday.

Since the newspaper's articles were published, nearly 2,000 electric fans have been donated to local hospitals.

Ma Yu, 53, a nurse from Beijing University Hospital, has not seen her 84-year-old father for half a month since she began taking care of SARS patients. A donation of a couple mobile phones from Panasonic China made to her hospital on Saturday has enabled them to stay in touch through short messages and even to see each other through digital pictures.

The company donated a total of 20 GD88 cell phones to SARS medical workers and their family members around the city on Thursday last week.

Beijing Boya Invest Company had a similar idea when it contributed 18 video telephones to six hospitals this week for use by SARS patients.

As Beijing beefs up its efforts against SARS, contribution has become a hot word among local media



Yan Renying (left), 90, Wang Guangchao, 91, retired professors from Beijing University's medical school, have donated 20,000 yuan. Photo by Wang Wei

and residents.

Since it was set up by the municipal government two weeks ago, the Beijing Donation Receiving Organization has been busy handling contributions of cash and goods such as medicine, food and equipment.

"Among those turning up with contributions to show their sympathy for the victims of the unexpected calamity are a number of organizations. But most donors are just ordinary residents of Beijing," said organization employee Ding Kaishan. "Most of the donations are allocated to medical departments. And some of them will also be sent to low-income SARS victims."

Over 300 local residents have volunteered to help take care of the families of medical staff working in SARS hospitals.

On April 29, the municipal committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League and the Beijing Volunteer Society opened a hotline, 010-65192826, to recruit volunteers.

The hotline has been deluged with applicants from people of all age groups, ranging from 18 to 61.

"Let me drive an ambulance and I can work 24-hours-a-day," said Cao Yongshun, a 58-year old retired driver.

On May 4, the General Office of the State Council, China's cabinet, issued a circular calling for the good administration of money and materials donated for the prevention and control of SARS.

According to the circular, local governments and departments concerned are instructed to set up organized systems to accept donations.

Civil affairs and health departments, and the China Red Cross and China Charity Federation are tasked with administering donations. Other departments and social organizations are forbidden from accepting donations.

All donations are to be reported to the Ministry of Civil Affairs which shall inform the State Council and the China National Headquarters for the Prevention and Control of SARS.

The departments and organizations that accept donations are required to regularly make public the distribution and use of donated money and materials.

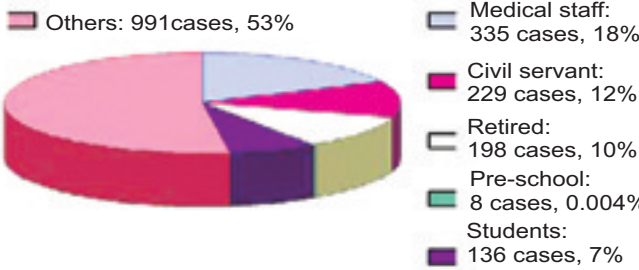
Departments concerned are asked to crack down on illegal activities to collect donations and strengthen auditing and supervision over the administration of donations.

The circular also calls on news media to play a supervisory role.

The Beijing Donation Receiving Organization received 160 million yuan in cash and 21 million yuan in material donations by Wednesday for the fight against SARS.

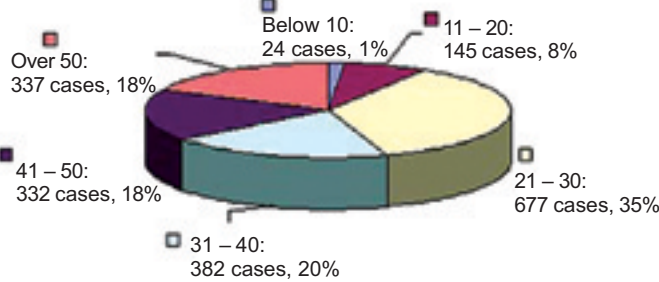
Beijing SARS Patients Categorization

Occupation Groups (Till May 5)



Source: Beijing Joint Working Group on SARS

Age Groups (Till May 5)



Donation Box

■ In order to help medical workers fighting SARS and isolated to their hospitals contact friends and family, China Mobile and Beijing Communication Corporation donated 2.5 million yuan worth of IP cards to the Beijing Donation Receiving Organization on Saturday last week.

■ Monetary donations can be directly made to the China Youth Development Foundation, or by sending a mobile phone short message to the number 5000, after which individual

mobile phone accounts will be charged for a 5-yuan contribution.

■ Since April 30, *Beijing Youth Daily* and the Beijing Youth Development Foundation have been running a crafty campaign to draw donations with 'Angel Foundation' non-commercial ads. The names of enterprises that contribute to the campaign are printed on a full-page ads in the newspaper, while the money is put into the Angel Foundation for distribution to local medical staff.

By Lily Li

Largest Medical Waste Disposal Site Set Up

By Ivy Zhang

The largest closed medical waste disposal site in the city was set up in Fengtai district this Tuesday. The facility can incinerate up to seven tons of medical waste per day.

According to emergency plans for disposal of sewage and waste contaminated with the SARS virus released by the General State Environmental Administration, waste from SARS patients must be collected in special containers for separate disinfection and cannot be dumped into the general sewage system. Such waste is to be properly disposed of after being disinfected, preferably by incineration.

Spitting Faces Crackdown

By Ivy Zhang

The fines for spitting in public places were raised to up to 50 yuan last Saturday and the penalties for littering were jacked to a maximum of 200 yuan.

Spitting is an easy way to spread the SARS virus, as it can live in phlegm for up to 30 hours, and people can become infected by inhaling flying globules of saliva or phlegm from a carrier.

A hotline, 6851 6110, has been set up for the public to report cases of inappropriate spitting.

Salaries of Patients Protected

By Sun Ming

The Ministry of Personnel issued an order recently that all SARS victims and people who are quarantined must continue to receive their normal salaries and benefits from their employers. Work units cannot fire or otherwise release such people until they have recovered or been released from quarantine.

No New Dog Tags for Now

By Sun Ming

The annual time to register for dog licenses will be delayed to an as yet undetermined date, announced a spokesman for the Beijing Municipal Public and Security Bureau last Friday. The decision was made with the intention of preventing the possible spread of SARS as people crowd to register their pets. Dog registration is normally conducted during May and June each year.

Car Registration Suspended

By Ivy Zhang

Starting this Tuesday, the regular examination of vehicles, drivers' license reviews and driver's license renewal services have been suspended. Temporary car plates will be issued for new cars after owners file proper applications for registration, according to the Beijing Public Security Bureau.

Cab Drivers Get Break

By Sun Ming

An order issued by the Beijing Transportation Committee, Beijing Tax Bureau and Beijing Treasury Bureau on Sunday has cut the monthly usage fees taxi drivers have to pay to their companies by half for May through July.

According to the order, cab drivers that live in quarantined areas or who have family members working on the front lines of the fight against SARS can take paid leave of absence from their companies.

Bus Stops Moved

By Sun Ming

Last Thursday, the Beijing Public Transportation Company announced all bus stops near the ten local hospitals designated for accepting SARS patients will be moved 300 meters away from their original locations in the interest of protecting passengers' safety.

Feeding the Front Line

Two young chefs, engaged to be married, will spend this month preparing meals for health workers at China's largest hospital devoted to treating SARS patients

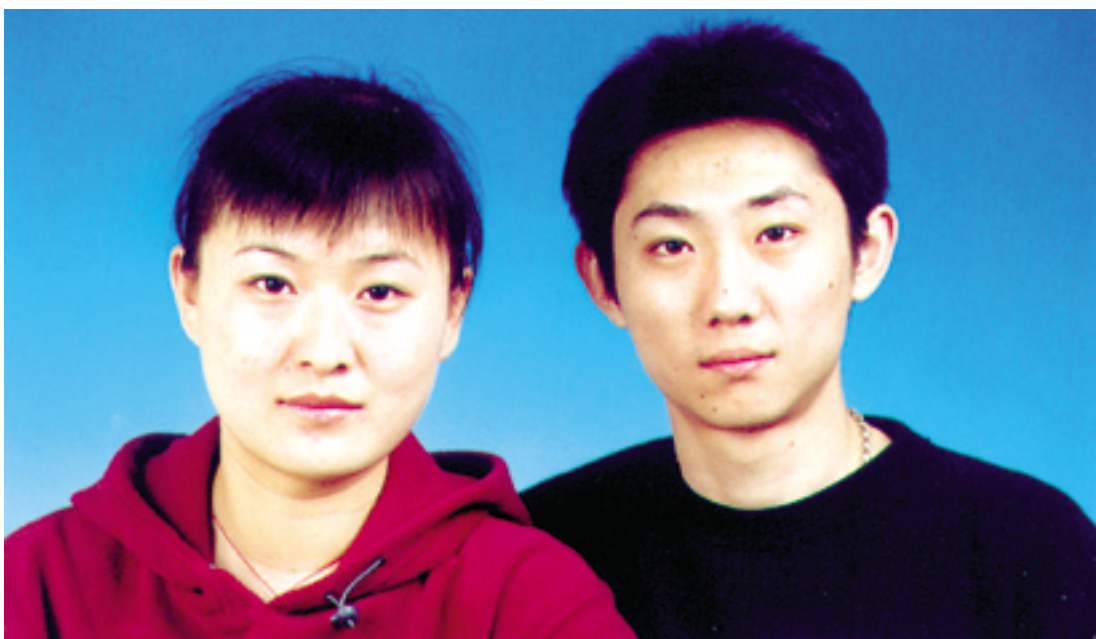
By Su Wei

He is 26, a chef at the Chinese restaurant of the Continental Grand Hotel. She is 25, a pastry chef at the same hotel. They were senior high school classmates, and fell in love six years ago. They both received their senior chef certificate five years ago. Now they are working as cooks at Xiaotangshan Hospital, a newly built hospital for SARS patients, preparing meals for the 1,200 military medical staff from all over China.

"When we leave the hospital, it will be June and the medical examination we took for our marriage will no longer be valid," said Xue Chang. Xue and his fiancée, Gao Huijing, were to register their marriage on May 28. That day is Gao's birthday, Xue's mother's birthday according to the Chinese lunar calendar, and a day neither of the young lovers would ordinarily work.

On April 30 at 6 pm, when Xue Chang was chatting with Gao and his parents at his home in Haidian District, the telephone rang. "It was a strange call. I could not figure out what it was about or who he was talking to," recalled Gao. "He simply said 'No problem. One month is not so long. I am able to and want to go.'"

Xue says he did not want to tell Gao what it was about at first. But she persisted, and he eventually told her that he would go to work at Xiaotangshan Hospital for one month. "She said she wanted to go with me. But I did not want her to be in danger." Gao responded that she wanted to be always with him, no matter



Gao Huijing (left) and Xue Chang took this photo for their marriage registration on May 28.

where he went, or how dangerous it would be.

Telling his parents was difficult, Xue says. "My mother said nothing, she just cried. My father simply told me to be careful. I could see he was trying hard to keep calm, I comforted him, explaining that it was dangerous working there, but not too dangerous."

Now Xue calls his parents every day before starting work, at around 11 am. "It is a simple and easy call. I usually tell them that I am eating and sleeping well, that I am safe and that the work is not too heavy." He says his mother does not cry any more, at least, not before he hangs up.

As for Gao, she says she still has not told her parents she is working at Xiaotangshan Hospital. "They live in Harbin. Telling them will only cause them to worry about me." She says she has told Xue's mother to say that the

hotel she is working at is sealed and staff are not allowed to contact their family. "I do not call them often, because I am afraid they'll find out that I am telling a lie."

Gao says her elder sister fell and hurt her ribs when seeing her off on May 2. It is the first time during the telephone interview that her voice becomes a little shaky. "She tells me the injury is not too severe and she is recovering."

As part of their daily work at the hospital, both Xue and Gao disinfect their work area and sterilize utensils before, during and after preparing meals. "We never did such work before, it was done by cleaning staff at the hotel," says Xue.

Gao's main responsibility is steaming rice, something of a change from preparing pastries. "Every day three of us steam four 25-kilo bags of rice," she says, adding that she hopes in the future she will

have the opportunity to make some pastries for the other medical staff.

She says the difficulties she faces in her work are tiny compared with those of the chefs who prepare dishes at the hospital. "My boyfriend cut his hand while cleaning the kitchen and the wound will not heal because he always has to wear rubber gloves."

Xue says he is aware that the taste of the dishes he prepares at the hospital is "a little different to those made at the hotel." It is the first time he has used a one-meter diameter cooking pot. "The ones we use at the Continental Hotel are around 40 centimeters."

Xue is 180 centimeters tall and weighs 60 kilograms. The weight of a cooked meat dish is around 100 kilograms, 50 kilograms for a vegetable dish. "Usually three chefs finish one dish."

Gao and Xue have almost no time to talk to each other.

"Every day we finish work at midnight or even 2 am and we can hardly get up before 10 am," says Xue. "We are too tired," adds Gao.

But they both say that their life at the hospital is good, though every day they only cross one road to go to work in the kitchen in the early afternoon and walk back to their dorm in the early morning of the following day. They have Chinese chess, cards and badminton, but they never have the time, or the energy, to play.

When Gao says she prefers instant noodles to the meals they are served at the hospital, Xue says he is concerned that she is becoming much thinner. "I have to force her to eat more, even though there are none of her favorite vegetable dishes."

Gao suddenly interrupts, saying "Believe me that I am happy and feel satisfied. Every day I can see him. That's enough."

From Bus to Ambulance Driver

By Chen Ying

"It's an instinct to be afraid of epidemic. But we should take some positive action also," says Chen Jiazhi, an employee of Beijing Bashi bus company.

Chen and 49 of his co-workers were chosen from some 200 volunteers to assist the Beijing Emergency Medical Center on April 26 after Bashi learned that the center lacked drivers for the new ambulances distributed by the local government.

The first 27 started working for the center on April 29 after receiving some basic training, and the remainder took up their positions Wednesday. "Our job is to drive the ambulances to transfer the SARS patients," Chen says. "For the day duty, we convey patients from home to hospital, or from one urban hospital to another. For the night duty, we deliver patients to certain hospitals on the outskirts of the city, which have been designated or newly-set-up to treat SARS patients."

"I didn't inform my family until after I had made my decision," says Chen. "My daughter asked me why the company chose me. I retorted why shouldn't they choose me? Now my family strongly support me." He adds that his wife often sends him short mobile messages to encourage him.

"We have to wear a special three-layer protective suit. Even professional staff take more than 20 minutes to put it on." Chen says he begins to sweat profusely after donning just the first layer. He and his colleagues have to wear the suit for four to eight hours every day. "Do you know the feeling of taking the sauna? That's what I think when I take the suit off every time," Chen told *Beijing Today*. "And we can't drink or use the bathroom during work," he says.

To avoid contamination, the drivers have to stay in the cabin of the ambulance throughout the transfer process. Chen says he will never forget the scene when he and some of his colleagues went to Beijing No. 6 Hospital Tuesday night to transfer some special patients to Xiaotangshan, where a new epidemic hospital has been set up. "Those patients are doctors, who caught the disease during their work."

Chen looked on as one doctor offered to send for an oxygen bag for another who was having difficulty breathing. "I don't want to be a bother," the other one said. They're so great. But I couldn't do anything to help, just give them a thumbs-up gesture."



Quarantined Director Works as Driver

By Su Wei

Five minutes after putting on his protective clothing, He Jinliang's forehead is beaded with sweat as he drives two students who are running a fever across the campus to the university hospital.

"Today I am not too busy. I only transported three fevered students," He Jinliang told *Beijing Today*. He unzips his protective suit but stays in the sun. The collar of his red T-shirt is already wet.

Usually he transports seven or eight fevered students every day from their quarantined building inside the campus of Beifang Jiaotong University to the university hospital in the residential area. "The trip takes only a few minutes," he said. "But I have to wait for the diagnoses to be made. It takes two hours."

He Jinliang is the only driver at the university ferrying students to the hospital for SARS diagnosis, but he is not a driver by

profession. His official title is director of the entertainment center of the rear-service group of the university. "I am the party secretary of the center," he says.

On April 17, the university called him to find a driver to take some students with SARS symptoms from their apartment building to the school hospital. He Jinliang says there was a driver right there in his office, but he decided to transport the students himself. He says he did not think too much about the risk of contracting SARS, though he felt "a little uneasy upon seeing all those students wearing face masks."

He waited outside the school hospital for two hours, even though no one had asked him to stay. "I suddenly overheard that the university was to call an ambulance to take four of the students to Renmin Hospital. I offered to take them myself, in order to save time. The sooner they

receive treatment, the better."

He says he realized immediately that he might have contracted SARS and would have to be quarantined, but reminded himself that as a party member of 23 years and as a party secretary, he must live up to his title and status.

On their arrival at Renmin Hospital around 9 pm, they were told that no more patients with infectious diseases were being accepted. "It was windy and raining. The students wanted to go back to fetch some clothes. After talking with Zheng Conghua, the school hospital president who accompanied us, we persuaded the students to remain calm and called the university to sent some quilts and contact another hospital."

It was not until 3 am the next morning that the four students were admitted by Beijing Chest Hospital. Back at the university, He Jinliang was quarantined due to his close contact with the students showing SARS symptoms.

He says he occasionally thinks of his wife, who is seriously ill. "She was diagnosed with cancer of the nose and pharynx five years ago. Sometimes she cannot walk unaided. But whenever I call her, she always says, 'we are looking forward to seeing you back with a healthy body ...'"

The ringing of his mobile phone breaks the silence. He says he has to drive another two fevered students to the school hospital. Before departing, he says that he refused to take a break during the May Day holiday. "But if they asked me to have a rest now, I would not say no."



He Jinliang dressed for his new, temporary, work.

Photo by Su Wei

Keeping Fit to Stay Healthy

By Su Wei

For the past 20 or so days, Ning Yuzhen, 69, has spent three hours every day playing ball games in front of a residential apartment building at Zhichun Dongli Community in Haidian District. "It is because of SARS that I learnt playing these new games. It is because of such games that I make new friends," she said.

Ning says she once thought it was a pity that she could not go to the Summer Palace after the condition of SARS in Beijing became severe. "My daughter is a doctor and she needs to work overtime every day. So I have to stay at home looking after my granddaughter." She says her husband spent nearly 200 yuan to buy two badminton racquets and a pair of Taiji balls.

She says there are several other people from her community who regularly join her. "How funny that we all live in the same building but we did not know each other before."

Dong Ruiqiao, 61, recalls she refused Ning's first invitation to play Taiji ball, for she did not know how to play. "Ning then brought the badminton. I told her that I could not play well but she told me that she did not know how to play at all." Now Dong plays ball games for two hours a day, sometimes even missing the evening news program on TV.

"I have long been thinking what I can do for the society to fight SARS. I can do nothing directly, but I can encourage more people to like sports and do sports more frequently. So fewer people will so easily succumb to SARS."



SARS Suspect Collapses in Street

By Lily Li

A young man collapsed suddenly in the street at Guan Zhuang, Chaoyang at 5 pm last Friday. A security guard went to take his temperature and the gathering crowd moved hastily back when he read out "39.8 degrees." An ambulance was called and the man was taken to hospital and is under surveillance as a suspected SARS case.

Photos by Zeng Chuanmin

Dozens of Officials Punished Nationwide

By Lily Li
As SARS becomes a greater problem in more parts of the country, heads are starting to roll. Three officials in Xuchang, Henan Province, were punished on Monday for reporting of a suspected SARS case 13 days after his discovery last month and the failure to take effective measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

Li Tianchen was removed from the post of dean and secretary of the Party Committee of the Xuchang Transportation Hospital and Huang Chaoye, vice secretary of the Party Committee of the Transportation Bu-

reau, and Zhang Changjiang, manager of the patient nursing department, of the same hospital, were given severe warnings.

Since Health Minister Zhang Wenkang and Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong were fired for covering up the rising toll of SARS on April 20, more than 40 officials nationwide have been punished or given the sack.

On Sunday, eight officials, including the vice mayor, were dismissed from their posts in Zhuozhou, Hebei Province. In Changsha, Hunan Province, seven officials were fired by April 27. Hunan is believed to have been the first province to sack a se-

nior official over SARS.

Also in April, at least four officials were fired in each of the provinces and autonomous regions of Hainan, Jinagxi, Shaanxi, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi and Henan. Most of those punished were leaders of hospitals and local health bureaus, and they received the axe for reasons including irresponsibility in fighting SARS and neglecting public safety.

"The many official punishment cases show the determined attitude of our Party and the government for strict discipline to win the fight against SARS," said a commentary issued by the Xinhua news agency on April 28.

As a result, officials are paying closer attention to the disease. While inspecting the campus of Shenyang Industrial University on Saturday, Bo Xilai, governor of Liaoning Province, pledged that if any university in his province had a large SARS outbreak, he would resign from his position.

"If an outbreak occurs in a dorm room, the head of the provincial education committee will be fired. If a whole class faces a serious SARS outbreak, the vice governor in charge will be fired, and if any university suffers a large-scale outbreak, I will resign as governor," Bo said.

Nation Struggles Towards Recovery

By Zhao Hongyi
As the SARS crisis persists, the Chinese government and its people are trying to return to life and work as normal.

Wang Fujian, a retired professor from the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, complained about the realities of the May 1 holiday, "It's nasty to have to cover your mouth with a mask all day long."

Professor Wang is not the only local fed up with the endless alarm about the spread of SARS prior to the holiday. Concern was great enough that few people ventured far from their homes during the five-day official vacation.

By Tuesday this week, the capital had 1,897 confirmed SARS victims, 1,510 suspected cases, 103 deaths and around 15,000 people held under quarantine.

The situation is also serious but more encouraging in some other areas of the country, such as Guangdong, where infection rates have been declining since last weekend, and Shanghai, which is recording a steady two or three new cases per day.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa declared on May 5 that the special region's daily new cases of SARS have dropped into the single digits. "It's a positive figure, but we still have to keep up our efforts until the end," he said. Tung also announced that his administration will start discussions as early as this week with the World Health Organization about lifting the travel warning issued for Hong Kong in early April.

On Wednesday, a State Council executive meeting, presided over by Premier Wen Jiabao, called for efforts to prevent and control SARS while stressing the central work of economic construction, in order to maintain steady economic growth and minimize the losses generated by the highly contagious disease.

Not all medical experts, however, share the apparent optimism revealed in that announcement.

Zhong Nanshan, director of the Guangzhou Respiratory Disease Research Institute and who has been working against SARS since last year, predicted the number of SARS cases in Beijing might show real decline in the near future. "But we still need another week of observation before firmer predictions can be made" Zhong said at a press conference held Sunday evening in the capital.

Less encouraging is Zeng Guang, a leading researcher at the Beijing-based Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, who conceded that this virus is likely to continue to exist around the world for a long time. "We are working on prevention, and will be able to control this virus when we find a vaccine. But, like HIV, Legionnaire's disease and the ebola virus, we will never be able to completely eradicate it."



Yao Cuiping, a nurse at the First Military Medical University in Guangzhou says goodbye to her 10-month-old daughter before leaving to help the anti-SARS efforts in Beijing, along with 61 of her colleagues, on Monday.

Xinhua Photo



The sign at this road block outside Ligezhuang village in Miyun County reads, "For the safety of you, your family and the whole village, no taxis or outside cars can pass."

Photos by Su Wei

Beijingers, Begone!

By Su Wei
It used to be that Miyun County in the suburbs of Beijing geared itself towards drawing visitors from downtown. Nowadays, however, simply the sight of cars with Beijing plates is enough to send locals scurrying into their homes or donning face masks.

A *Beijing Today* reporter headed to Miyun on a privately-run long distance bus departing from Dongzhimen on Tuesday.

Before boarding, every passenger had to provide detailed and accurate information including their names, destinations, addresses, telephone numbers and health condition. According to bus driver Cao Fusheng, all long distance buses leaving from Beijing have been required to cull such information since May 5.

Cao added that few Beijingers are taking his bus these days, and told *Beijing Today* that getting into villages in the Miyun area is complicated. "The bus has to be parked outside the village after being sprayed with disinfectant. We also need to be sprayed with disinfectant at the entrance, and have to listen to villagers on duty at the gates," he said.

Our reporter confirmed a se-



rious of obstacles have been set up to prevent Beijingers from entering villages in the Miyun area. Locals have erected roadblocks and posted volunteers at the gates to most villages and communities who demand to see proof of health and other documentation or turn would-be-visitors away.

Among the monitors is Zong Jianhua, a middle-aged woman who mans the gate at the Luguzhuang village entrance. She told *Beijing Today* that if she let any outsider into the village without proper authorization, she would lose 15 yuan of wage for the day and may be fined an additional 15 yuan.

"I tend to get sleepy around noon, but I must remain vigilant, because someone could use that as an opportunity to slip through the gate," Zong said.



Donation Box

Henan: Henan Province started to send high-quality wheat to Beijing on Sunday and promised to ship 20,000 tons of wheat within one week. The province is also preparing large amounts of flour and cooking oil for use by Beijingers. transportation in a week.

As of Sunday, Henan Nanjiacun Group's food transportation team had sent 100,000 boxes of instant noodles and 30,000 bags of noodles to the capital. Zhengzhou Sanquan Food Company has delivered 300 tons of frozen food and Suanghui Group has contributed 150 tons of meat to Beijing.

Anhui: Anhui Province had donated medicine and medical supplies such as airproof outfits and masks worth over 1 million yuan as of Sunday.

Hebei: This province's government has contributed 13,000 cars, 60 percent of which are for transportint ma-

terials. The city of Qinhuangdao donated medical equipment and food worth 560,000 yuan to Beijing last Thursday, and sent a team of 39 doctors and nurses to join the fight against SARS.

Shanghai: Shanghai has donated 1 million masks and 22,000 boxes of medicine materials to the capital.

Shanghai Roche Pharmaceutical has donated medicine worth 10 million to the Ministry of Public Health through the Shanghai government.

Guangdong: Guangdong has held four training classes for hundreds of doctors and nurses from Beijing and Shanxi and Hebei provinces. Famous SARS experts like Zhong Nanshan, Tang Xiaoping and many experienced doctors and nurses have joined Beijing's efforts

against the disease.

Liaoning: The cities of Panjin, Huludao and Chaoyang are providing vegetables for Beijingers. The Liaoning Provincial Business Bureau has promised to donate 50,000 masks and delivered 20,000 as of Saturday.

Tianjin: Although supplies of masks and quarantine clothes are in short supply in Tianjin, the city has sent 70,000 masks and other needed materials to Beijing.

Guangxi: Green Paths were set up on railways and highways to speed up the transportation of materials to Beijing.

Tibet: Qizheng Tibetan Medicine Group donated 1 million yuan worth of Tibetan medicine to the Beijing China-Japan Friendship Hospital and Beijing United Medical Center Hospital on Saturday in the first donation from Tibet.

By Lily Li

Quick Approval Granted for Import of Medical Equipment

By Hou Mingxin
The Beijing Foreign Economic and Trade Commission promised to provide quick approval service for applications to import medical equipment related to SARS on Monday.

"Usually, we need at least five days to complete procedures after receiving applications," said commission official An Qi.

From April 23 to 30, the commission received several applications for the purchase of imported medical equipment including 103 X-ray machines, 1,920 oxygen masks and over 11,000 oxygen tank.

Rural Areas Targeted for Education

Six Chinese ministries and commissions have begun distributing three million posters featuring rudimentary information on SARS and its prevention to rural areas nationwide.

Three to four of the posters will be sent to every rural village in the country by May 20, according to the requirements of the authorities, which include the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture.

In addition, 3,000 anti-SARS DVDs are in the pipeline and expected to reach every county in China by the end of the month for use by local TV stations.

Meanwhile, the Chinese Association for Science and Technology will soon begin providing free information and related materials on the fight against SARS in the country's rural areas via the internet on two websites: www.cpst.net.cn and www.cast.org.cn.

(Xinhua)

Virus May Not Be New

By Lily Li
Researchers at Zhengzhou University announced last Thursday that the SARS virus may actually be a long-existent virus, not a new strain as commonly believed.

Professor Xue Lexun, a member of the research team, said although the SARS virus appears like a coronavirus and may be a member of the coronavirus family, such beliefs could be completely wrong, since its albumen gene and amino acid sequence have fundamental differences from those of any know coronavirus.

"We may be just discovering a virus that has been around for a long time," the professor added.

Nanjing Quarantines 10,000

By Lily Li
Nearly 10,000 people have been put in quarantine and over ten areas isolated in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, according to a television press conference held by that province's government on Sunday.

The city has implemented an emergency SARS prevention and control system since seeing a rapid increase in suspected SARS cases since the first local case was confirmed on April 30.

Xu Zhongzi, vice mayor of Nanjing, said at the televised meeting that the epidemic is just in its beginning stages in the city, with the peak expected to come in the last two weeks of this month.

Students Poisoned in Guangxi

By Guo Yuandan
On Tuesday, 88 students were poisoned by supposed SARS-preventing Chinese medicine prepared by the Youcaiping Primary School in Fengshan County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

School headmaster Fu Guojin bought raw medicinal herbs from a local market and stewed them into a medicinal brew which was then passed out to every classroom in a bucket.

Later, many of the 122 students that took the concoction fell sick with headaches, abdominal pains and vomiting.

Big Cities Crusade Against Spitting

By Guo Yuandan
To prevent the spread of SARS, local governments nationwide are taking measures to punish such behavior as spitting on the street, particularly in large cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

Since May 4, the Beijing government jacked fines for public spitting to a maximum of 50 yuan, still far short of Shanghai, where penalties can run as high as 200 yuan.

Similar rules have been put in place in Guangzhou and Shenzhen, where spitters not only have to pay 50 yuan and litterers 200 yuan, but they also have to pick up after themselves.

Joke Backfires at Shenzhen Airport

By Guo Yuandan
While boarding a plane in Shenzhen's Baoan International Airport last Thursday, a passenger that joked that he may have SARS caused his flight to be delayed for three hours.

During check-in procedures, the passenger had to undergo a temperature test in the airport. When he came out a bit above average, he was forced to take a second test, which showed no signs of SARS. Then, he had to undergo another body temperature check inside the plane's cabin.

Visibly annoyed, the man told a nearby air steward that he might have SARS. The flight crew immediately informed airport authorities, who ordered the plane be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, all passengers checked and had the man sent to hospital.

Later, local police ordered he not be able to fly. Further investigations are underway.

SARS can be Eliminated, WHO Chief Says

But she admits it's too early to say whether outbreak has peaked

Brussels, May 7 (AP) - SARS can still be contained and eliminated, the head of the World Health Organization predicted Tuesday after China's premier Wen Jiabao described Beijing's crisis as grave and warned officials to work hard to fight the disease or be punished.

In Brussels, European health ministers met in an emergency session to standardize anti-SARS measures across the continent, which has reported 33 probable cases, but no deaths.

"We have a window of opportunity. We still can contain the first new disease of this century and make it go away," Gro Harlem Brundtland, WHO director-general, said at the meeting.

Meanwhile, Ms. Brundtland said that it was too early to know whether the SARS epidemic had peaked.

The UN agency said Thursday it had revised the global death rate from the disease sharply upward to 14-15 percent. WHO, which had previously put the rate at 6-10 percent, said age appears to be a key factor in surviving SARS, with less than one percent of SARS patients aged 24 or younger dying, compared to more than 50 per-



World Health Organization (WHO) Secretary-General Gro Harlem Brundtland warned it was too early to say whether the worldwide SARS epidemic had peaked. (AFP Photo)

cent for those over 65.

The WHO revisions are based on data from Canada, Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam. They follow a study earlier this week that found the death rate of SARS patients in Hong Kong was around 20 percent.

The worldwide toll from SARS passed 500 dead and 7,000 infected in nearly 30 countries

and regions on Thursday.

The organization said the fight against SARS in China had reached a crucial stage as investigators began fanning out into rural areas where mass outbreaks are feared.

Also on Thursday, the World Health Organization extended a SARS travel warning to Tianjin, Inner Mongolia and Taipei in Taiwan.

The agency has already issued travel warnings for Hong Kong, Beijing and China's Guangdong and Shanxi provinces.

In Europe, the EU health ministers agreed in Brussels on Tuesday that passengers arriving from SARS-infected countries should fill in questionnaires on their travels rather than subjecting them to medical checks.

The ministers considered an Italian proposal to screen all passengers arriving from SARS-affected zones, but turned down the idea.

So far Europe has recorded no deaths from the disease. But EU Health Commissioner David Byrne said after talks with Brundtland that the SARS outbreak was a "wake-up call" for the European Union. (William Foreman)

Global SARS Picture Changing, as More People Recover

US health officials lifted travel advisories to Singapore and Hanoi, Vietnam this week, where the SARS outbreak appears to be diminishing.

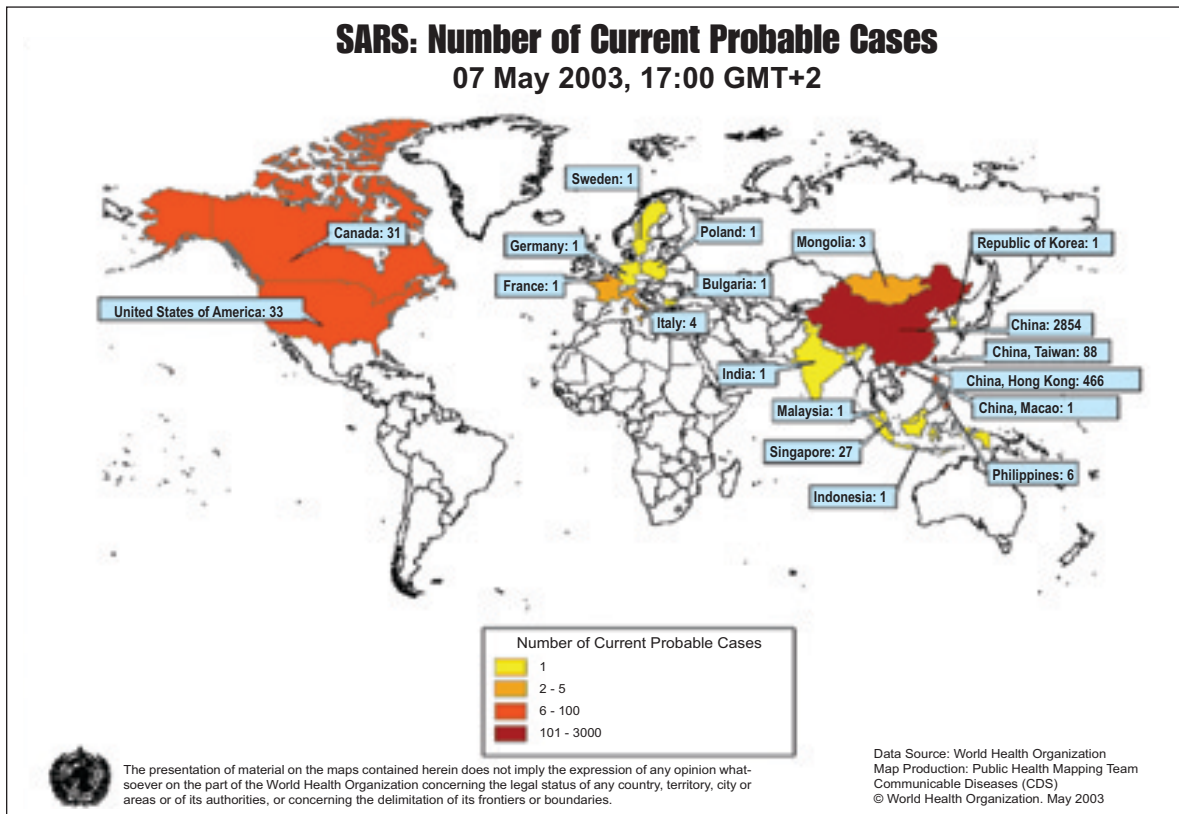
As of Tuesday, 6,727 people had been infected with the virus worldwide, and 479 had died, according to World Health Organization tallies. More than 2,800 patients have recovered.

World Health Organization travel advisories remain in force for China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, though it has cancelled the warning on Vietnam and Canada's Toronto. Hong Kong is seeking a discussion with WHO about removing the travel restriction as early as possible.

In Canada, which has had more SARS cases than any country outside Asia, researchers are reporting that the majority of cases were related to hospital exposure.

Chinese media reports from Moscow said Russia had found its first probable SARS case in one of its Far Eastern cities bordering China's Heilongjiang Province.

Compiled by BJ Today



Race to Patent SARS Virus Renews Debate

San Francisco, May 6 (AP) - Scientists have yet to find a treatment for the SARS virus, but already a race is on to patent it.

Several biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, the federal government and researchers in Canada and Hong Kong have filed SARS-related patent applications in recent weeks, claiming ownership of everything from bits of genetic material to the virus itself.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for instance, claims ownership of the virus and its entire genetic content.

Rather than trying to profit if such a patent were awarded, the CDC says its application is to prevent others from monopolizing the field.

The World Health Organization, which has been lauded for its quick response and deft coordination of an international response, said none of the patent applicants had contacted it regarding their intellectual property intentions.

"What we care about is that international collaboration continues to function," WHO spokesman Dick Thompson said. "Patents don't really concern us."

In Hong Kong, University of Hong Kong microbiologist Malik Peiris said Monday that the school's intellectual property arm had filed for a patent on the SARS virus.

Peiris said that after his team discovered the virus, it sent samples to other scientists but no patent was immediately sought. When it became clear others were

seeking patents, the Hong Kong team then sought one, Peiris said.

The British Columbia Cancer Agency, which first sequenced the virus genome at its Genome Sciences Center, has also filed for a patent. While the patent could lead to royalties in the future, the goal for now is to keep the information available to all needing it, the agency said.

Last week, biotechnology company Combimatrix filed patent applications claiming ownership of key components of two SARS genes thought to control reproduction of the virus once it invades people. Combimatrix, a subsidiary of Acacia Research Corp., hopes to create a drug that will jam the SARS reproduction system by targeting those two genes.

"If we didn't have patent protection, we wouldn't invest in the research," said Combimatrix president and chief executive Amit Kumar, whose company is based in Mukilteo, Washington state.

The race to patent aspects of the SARS virus has rekindled criticism of laws that allow living things to be patented.

Since a pivotal US Supreme Court ruling in 1980, the US Patent and Trademark Office has awarded patents for living things, most notably individual human genes.

In the US, entire humans can't be patented, but genes or parts of genes can if they prove to be new, useful and isolated by somebody using sophisticated scientific techniques. (Paul Ellas)

Canada Pledges US\$70 Million to Fight SARS

Ottawa, May 5 (Reuters) - The Canadian government said it would set aside US\$70 million this year to combat SARS, a deadly respiratory infection that has killed more than 400 people worldwide, including 23 in Canada.

In a statement from Prime Minister Jean Chretien's office, the government detailed steps it said were aimed at protecting the health of those who live in Canada and visit the country.

They included measures to help Canadians affected by the non-medical consequences of the outbreak, such as the dampening effect on tourism.

(David Ljunggren)



Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien (L) and Health Minister Anne McLellan (R) answer questions on SARS following a cabinet meeting in Toronto. Toronto is fighting to save its reputation after 23 SARS-linked deaths in the city. (AFP Photo)

Ontario Reports One New SARS Case

Ottawa, May 5 (AFP) - Ontario reported one new "probable" case of SARS on Sunday, bringing the total number of probable cases to 32, including 31 who are in hospital.

The provincial Ministry of Health said, however, that of the 31 probable cases, two are listed as "critical or deteriorating."

In total, Ontario has reported 265 probable or suspect cases of the disease since it broke out in March.

First SARS Case in Colombia

Bogota, Colombia, May 6 (AFP) - A 20-year-old Colombian woman who recently returned from a nine-month stay in Hong Kong is considered to have the first probable case of SARS in Colombia, an official said.

Deputy Social Protection Minister Juan Gonzalo Lopez said the woman, who was not named and lives in the southwestern department of Valle del Cauca, was suffering from symptoms consistent with SARS.

Lopez said the people with whom the woman had come into contact had been tested and there was no evidence the illness had been transmitted inside Colombia.

Six Gulf States Mull Travel Ban on SARS Regions

Doha, May 5 (Reuters) - Gulf Arab health officials proposed on Sunday that their six countries impose a blanket ban on people coming from states hit hardest by the deadly SARS virus.

Abdul Latif al-Khal, head of the infectious diseases department at Qatar's Public Health Ministry, said the ban would apply to China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore.

The oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) bloc - which includes Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman - is host to a large population of migrant workers from Asia.

UC Berkeley Bars Students from SARS Areas

Berkeley, California, May 6 (AP) - The University of California at Berkeley will turn away new students from SARS-infected China, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong this summer in what is believed to be the first such move by a major US university to prevent the spread of the virus.

The decision, announced on the campus website Friday, affects several hundred students who were planning to attend Berkeley for the summer term that begins May 27. Instead, those students will get their money back. (Michelle Locke)



Dr. Tracee Treadwell from the US Federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention speaks during a conference on the deadly epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome, organized by the faculty of medicine, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Medical Association, in Hong Kong. Treadwell showed a map of SARS cases in the US while discussing the CDC's response to the SARS outbreak in the US. (AP Photo)

Officials See Chance to Stop SARS, Scientists Disagree

Atlanta, May 5 (AP) - Despite only a few months' experience of SARS, global disease fighters sense an opportunity to stop the disease and prevent it from becoming a regular part of 21st century life.

It's important, health officials say, because once a virus is established - like AIDS, for example - it becomes more of a health and economic challenge.

"We do believe this disease can be totally contained and can be eradicated but we need to take this opportunity right now," Dr. Mike Ryan, coordinator of the World Health Organization's global alert network, said recently.

Newly emerging infectious diseases have been difficult to eliminate. Officials say the Ebola virus in the 1970s was the last time a potential global threat was contained.

But the WHO's broader experience of corralling 900 outbreaks of various diseases in recent years has given officials a sense about when a disease can be contained.

The control of SARS in Hanoi, Vietnam, has shown that even basic techniques in a

country with limited health resources can control an outbreak, said WHO spokesman Dick Thompson.

"There's nothing biological that says it can't be done," Thompson said. "Given what happened in Hanoi, it makes us believe nothing stands in our way except a whole lot of work."

But other health officials have said it's too early to tell what will happen with SARS.

Dr. Jeffrey Koplan, former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has said it is "very unrealistic" to expect health officials to "magically" stop its spread. Current director Dr. Julie Gerberding has said "it's too soon to predict where it's going to go."

In the past, officials have only been successful in eradicating a few emerging veterinary diseases, said Dr. Donald Hopkins, associate executive director of the Carter Center in Atlanta and a former CDC deputy director. The Carter Center promotes human rights and seeks to lessen human suffering, in part by improving global health conditions. (Daniel Yee)



Donation Box

Japan Itochu Corporation donated 1,800 sets of clothes for medical and quarantine use last Wednesday. It was the first foreign company to donate medical equipment. The company also promised to send 2,500 masks to Beijing in May.

The **German Embassy** in Beijing signed a contract with Ministry of Finance on Saturday to offer products worth 10 million Euros to help China combat SARS, including X-ray machines, blood analyst machines, respiration machines, air sterilization machines and medical equipment for quarantine.

America Genetec Medicine Group announced Saturday to a donation of 1000 gallons of BeyondRx, the medicine the company newly developed for SARS prevention, worth US\$100,000

to China's Ministry of Public Health and Beijing government to support the doctors and nurses combating SARS. The medicine can be smeared directly on the hand and face and can protect against SARS infection for six hours.

Chinese Students and Scholars Association in Columbia University wrote to Beijing Government last week expressing support for the city's fight with SARS. They donated 5000 N95 masks.

Air China flight CA986 with materials donated by **Chinese people in San Francisco** arrived at Beijing Capital International Airport at 5:15pm on Sunday. These materials include 200 exposure suits, masks, thermometers and sanitization liquid. Air China took on this transportation task for free.

By Lily Li

Capital Commerce Under Pressure



Laojia Pizza Qixingyuan Store in Shijingshan District begins to deliver food to the Lugu Community.
Xinhua Photo

By Shan Jinliang
The capital city has witnessed a serious decline in commerce, particularly in the service industry in the past week from April 30 to May 4, said Beijing Municipal Commercial Commission on Monday. The catering industry is one of the few showing signs of recovery following the gloomy May Day holiday. Commission spokesman Yan Ligang said department stores had been worst hit by the SARS virus, followed by

the catering and beverage industry, hairdressing and beauty salons and swimming pools. Yan said the sales volumes of department stores were 60 percent lower than the same period last year. However, supermarkets and convenience stores have only been slightly affected. During the May Day holiday from May 1 to May 5, the sales volume of department stores and the catering and beverage industries fell by 75 to 85 percent from that of last

year. But sales of fans, washing machines and refrigerators had risen slightly. Revenues for the catering and beverage industries are improving from late last month, partly because delivery services have become more popular. Yan said the commission and other relevant departments are conducting research into commercial difficulties at this time and are getting ready to issue policies to provide loans to companies.

Railway Income Slashed in Half

By Shan Jinliang

While the Ministry of Railways is busy with SARS prevention and unable to spend any time worrying about its losses from the epidemic, some experts predicted around half as many passengers as normal would take trains this holiday. The ministry had announced that all the tickets bought from April 24 to May 7 could be returned and given a full refund. The first priority is avoiding spreading the virus throughout China on trains. Considering the passenger number reduction from the mainland to Hong Kong last month, the Comprehensive Transportation Research Institute under the State Development and Planning Commission predicted railways could only generate an income of 500 to 600 million yuan this year; the figure was one billion yuan last year.

Annual Report Releases Postponed

By Lily Li

Seven companies, including Ben'gang Steel Plates, ST Shenzhen Overglobe and Ningcheng Laojiao, announced they had to delay releasing their annual reports because of SARS. More than 1,200 companies listed on the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges released their 2002 annual reports on time on April 29. Hua Lian Hypermarket said that because of SARS, the company couldn't hold its directors' meeting, which then made it impossible to release the annual report on time. But the company also promised to release the report as soon as possible. Linqiao Tap Water and Electric Power announced the postponement of shareholders meetings to reduce the risk of infection. Electric Power changed its meeting from May 12 to May 29, and Linqiao Tap Water cancelled its May 16 meeting.

A Long Holiday for Brokers and Investors

By Ema Ma

When most people returned to work on Tuesday, brokers and investors still had to stay at home for probably the longest holiday ever in China's stock and futures markets. To prevent mass infection by SARS, China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) announced last Tuesday an extension of the suspension of securities and futures trading. The markets will reopen on May 12 instead of May 5. The affected markets include Shanghai Stock Exchange, Shenzhen Stock Exchange, Shanghai Futures Exchange, Dalian Commodity Exchange and Zhengzhou Commodity Exchange. "Turnover has remained relatively steady as investors have kept dealing through the telephone or Internet," said Chen Yu, manager of Xiangcai Securities, Business Department. Shanghai Stock Exchange data indicates that turnover hit a record high in April since August 2000. "The robust trading is a result of upward sentiment from the change of management at the top of the CSRC at the beginning of this year," Professor He Qiang of the Finance Department of Central University of Finance and Economics told *Beijing Today*. "Short-term trends after the markets reopen will depend on improvement in the SARS situation," he added.

Laid-off Workers Needed for Housekeeping

By Shan Jinliang

The SARS virus has forced away a large number of migrant housekeepers from the city, and the Beijing Housekeeping Association has called for laid-off workers to take the available jobs. Deputy acting president of the association Li Dajing said a number of servants have left Beijing and companies from provinces and cities that provide housekeepers have suspended their business. Anyone interested in taking up one of the many vacant positions can ask for job information at community service centers.

Motorola Shuts Beijing Office

By Shan Jinliang

Motorola China, a top foreign investor, announced Wednesday it had closed its China headquarters office at Dabeyiao, Chaoyang District from May 3 to 11, but that all its staff would return to work after that. The announcement said a Motorola employee had been found to have contracted SARS. "Regarding the safety of all employees, the company will close the central air conditioning system from May 3 to 11, and the staff are required to work at home or in the office at Zizhuyuan, Haidian District from May 6 to 12 to help the company run smoothly," it added. About 600 employees in Motorola's other Beijing sales and business offices were unaffected, said Mary Lamb, a Hong Kong-based spokesman with the company early this week.

Sales of second phase governmental bonds began on May 1. Though some bank branches were closed, people still queued up to purchase the bonds.
Photo by Photocom



SARS Winners and Losers

By Shan Jinliang

The SARS virus may have raised the share values of listed SARS-related pharmaceutical companies and increased medicine sales, but it's not all good news. A number of producers and sales outlets have complained the government-imposed price limit and jump in the price of raw materials have hurt profits. China Eagle Securities analyst He Pingge said on May 3 that about one third of the listed pharmaceutical companies have seen their shares soar because they produce medicines or products related to combating SARS. But for some pharmaceutical production companies, revenue is taking a hit from the rise in price of medicinal materials supply. Traditional Chinese medicine has become popular in guarding against SARS, so some traditional Chinese medicinal material wholesalers have decided to rack up their prices to make the most of the temporary boom. For instance, in the medicinal material market of Anguo, Hebei Province, prices of almost all potentially SARS-related materials have risen by as much as ten times. At the same time, precautions that employers are having to take mean that production costs have risen substantially. But the government wants SARS medicines to remain affordable, hence the price limit. Tongrentang, a leading Chinese medicine producer said it's losing two yuan on one bottle of SARS prevention Chinese medicine. A PR official with Beijing Pharmaceutical Group said the company's profits fell by 23 percent in April. One reason is that it lost around a million yuan on its SARS prevention remedy because of the price limit, the other being that the income from prescription medicines was slashed since few patients went to hospitals for treatment or medicine. The company is hoping it might get government subsidies to make up the difference. The newly established State Development Planning Commission together with local pricing departments have taken a few measures to punish individuals and companies who illegally raise medicinal material prices.

Beijing Settles First SARS Insurance Claim

By Lily Li

Ping An Insurance Company, Beijing Branch, paid out on an insurance claim of 50,000 yuan on April 22 for a client who had died of SARS. This was the first compensation case relating to SARS dealt with by a Beijing insurance company. However, around the country, more than 70 SARS sufferers or their relatives have already received insurance compensation of more than 400,000 yuan. In Guangdong, 300,000 yuan has been paid out in 56 SARS cases. China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) Beijing Office issued

a notice on April 17 requiring all insurance companies to deal with cases relating to SARS promptly, practically and effectively and to defend the benefits of SARS sufferers and their relatives. No reason would be acceptable to refuse or delay compensation. The notice also said that any insurance companies found attempting to evade their responsibilities in cases of SARS compensation would be punished severely. Wang Xianzhang, general manager of China Life Insurance Company said his company had informed its 600,000 salesmen of this regulation.

Zhongguancun Enterprises Get Government Support

Haidian District in Beijing plans to support high-tech enterprises in Zhongguancun, the high-tech business center, said the district's spokesman Monday. Spokesman Yu Jun, who is also deputy head of the district, said some enterprises in this area, especially the small and medium-sized ones, are facing difficulties due to the spread of

SARS in Beijing. The local government intends to help pull them through by reducing office rents and expanding sales channels. As of April 26, only 70 percent of the 8,400 high-tech enterprises in Zhongguancun were actively conducting business, while 10 percent had temporarily suspended operations, said Yu.

Green Light for SARS-related Loans

By Hou Mingxin

On April 24, Beijing Yishang Meijie Company and Beijing Jingjia Zhixing Company got loans worth a total of 18 million yuan from Beijing City Commercial Bank within just eight hours of submitting their application for a loan

to purchase SARS prevention medicine and equipment. Almost all the city's commercial banks have improved their service efficiency in the area of SARS-related business since late last month. They have promised to shorten their approval

State Punishes Illegal Businesses in Name of SARS Prevention

By Shan Jinliang

The State Administration for Industry and Commerce revealed ten cases on Monday of companies providing substandard SARS prevention medicine and medical equipment. The ten companies are from Beijing, Hebei, Jilin, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Zhejiang, Fujian, Sichuan and Yunnan. Four cases involved pro-

duction and sale of bad quality masks in Chengdu, Hangzhou, Kunming and Changchun. Other cases include poor quality disinfectant and medicinal materials, illegal trading of medical equipment and illegal advertising. Of the two cases in Beijing, one involved 800buy.com.cn which promoted its hand care cream and ordinary health care products in the name of

SARS prevention on April 25. The other involved the illegal trading of disinfectant in Fengtai District, which was discovered on April 23. The State Development Planning Commission said on Wednesday that pricing departments at all levels had dealt with 26,200 cases of illegal SARS-related trading since China found its first SARS victims.



Donation Box

Tianshi Group announced a donation of three million yuan and health care products worth 42 million to fight SARS last Sunday. It's the biggest donation from a domestic company so far. **China Life Insurance Company** donated 6 million yuan to Beijing's six SARS treatment hospitals last Monday. **Suning Appliance Chains** donated 3 million yuan last Tuesday. **UFSOFT** donated 3 million yuan for

Beijing SARS work last Thursday, half of which was donated to SARS research institutions, and the other half to doctors and nurses. **China National Petroleum Corporation** donated 20 million yuan last Thursday. **Tsinghua University Groups** do-

nated medical equipment worth 1 million yuan last Friday. **Yangshengtang** donated vitamins worth five million yuan to the Ministry of Public Health last Friday. **Yili Group** and **Mengniu Group** from Inner Mongolia donated 7 million yuan to the Ministry of Public Health and 1.2 million yuan to the Inner Mongolia Department of Health on Saturday. **By Lily Li**

By Lisa Huang

As disinfectant is becoming an increasingly important part of people's lives in China, there are a couple of things you should know about it.

For instance, getting the concentration right: too low and it won't be effective in killing bacteria; too high and it could form a protective film on the surface of the bacteria. Also, disinfectant that's too strong can cause injury to the mouth, nose and respiratory tract. This week Beijing Today introduces several disinfectants available in Beijing and some important points in using them.



Know Your Disinfectant

Guo Yang Yi Suan 过氧乙酸 (Acidum Peroxyaceticum)

Efficacy

It can effectively destroy tubercle bacillus, mould, virus, gemma and some other microbes. It can be widely used in sterilizing the environment and all types of utensils.

Uses

1. Sterilizing dinner ware

Soak washed dinner ware in the disinfectant diluted in a proportion of 1:200 for 30 to 60 minutes, then rinse with clean water.

2. Disinfecting vegetables and fruit

Soak washed vegetables or fruit in the disinfectant diluted in a proportion of 1:500 for 10 minutes, then rinse with clean water.

3. Sterilizing room

Dilute the disinfectant in a proportion of 1:500 to 1:250. Close all doors and windows before spraying the room. 20 to 30 minutes later, open the doors and windows and ventilate the room for at least 15 minutes.

4. Cleansing skin and furniture

Dilute the disinfectant in a proportion of 1:500. Soak hands in it for about two minutes, then rinse them with clean water. The disinfectant used for cleansing furniture should be a dilution of between 1:500 and 1:100. Keep the disinfectant on the furniture for 30 minutes.

This kind of disinfectant can also be used to sterilize textiles (1:250, two hours), clinical thermometers (1:200, 15-30 minutes), and patients' excrement containers (1:200, five hours).

Reminders

It cannot be used to disinfect metal utensils. When spraying it to sterilize a room, wear a face mask.

Acidum Peroxyaceticum can corrode skin and eyes, so do not touch it directly. Wearing rubber gloves when using the disinfectant is recommended. If any of it splashes onto the skin or eyes, wash with clean water immediately.

The Following are Some Other Important Points

Some people use lai su shui (来苏水), a kind of red transparent liquid, to sterilize rooms. As a mixture of Cresolum and soap and having a special smell, it can fight microbe's protein and make it form a sediment, thus destroying some bacteria. However, it can only destroy common bacteria, not gemma or viruses.

Corridors, elevators, and stairs used by suspected SARS carriers should be disinfected. Spray chlorine disinfectant (1000 milligrams per liter) on the surface of the wall and floor (100 milligrams per square meter). Wait 30 minutes before cleaning thoroughly with clean water.

Possibly infected bedding and towels should be disinfected. Dilute chlorine disinfectant in a proportion of 250-500 milligrams/liter. Soak the bedding and towels in it for 30 minutes, then rinse them with clean water.

Air conditioning systems should be disinfected often. Cleanse the whole equipment with chlorine disinfectant (500-1000 milligrams per liter).

Mops and door knobs cannot be ignored. Dilute Acidum Peroxyaceticum disinfectant (1:500 to 1:200) and soak the mops in it for three minutes before rinsing with clean water. Clean the knobs with the same disinfectant every day.

Travel Advice

By Jerry

SARS is the first major new infectious disease of the 21st century and it is a particular problem for today's highly mobile society which has already spread it to all corners of the globe. A series of advisory tips have been issued to help minimize the risk.

Q: What should be done after traveling in a country where cases of SARS have been reported?

A: You should monitor your own health for 7 - 10 days. If you become ill with a fever of over 38 degrees that is accompanied by a cough or difficulty breathing, or that progresses to a cough and/or difficulty breathing, you should consult a health care provider.

Q: What is the difference between a "probable" SARS case and a "suspect" SARS case?

A: Suspect SARS cases are people who have fever, respiratory illness or who have recently been to an affected area or had contact with a SARS patient. Probable cases meet the criteria for a suspect case, as well as medical evidence (e.g., chest X-ray) of pneumonia or respiratory failure.

Q: Why the increased bureaucracy in travel?

A: All airlines that have carried passengers who have become ill with SARS have been asked to provide lists of passengers and contact information so that provincial public health personnel can contact them to see if they have become ill with the disease. Although simple in concept, there is no standardized, internationally accepted system for recording this information by international airlines. Some airlines are better prepared to provide the data than others. It is often difficult for a company to aggregate the data in a timely fashion. The information is often a mixture of coded data that requires considerable personnel time to decipher and organize.

Q: What precautionary measures can travellers take?

A: Although there are no specific preventive measures against SARS, you can take the following precautionary measures, which the World Health Organization and the Health Ministries of most countries have encouraged the general public to adopt:

- Observe good personal hygiene like the washing of hands and covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

- Be responsible. If you are unwell, wear a mask to protect those around you. See a doctor immediately.

- Build up your body's resistance by having a proper diet, adequate rest and exercise.

- Avoid crowded places if you are sick. Wear a face mask if you are ill and do have to go to a crowded place.

Have a Chinese Herb Bath

By Huang Lisha

Having a bath is a good way to kill bacteria as well as maintaining personal hygiene. The following is a Chinese herb bath prescription.

Composition: ten grams ban lan gen (板蓝根), ten grams jin yin hua (金银花), five grams da qing ye (大青叶), five grams bo he (薄荷), and five grams ku gen shen (苦根参).

Directions: put all the herb medicine into a gauze bag; boil it in two liters of water for around two minutes. Then pour the water together with the medicine bag into the bathtub, mixing it with warm water.

Efficacy: effectively destroying skin viruses; improving circulation; relieving fatigue.

Contra-indications: people who have foot oedema, diabetes, blood diseases, like haemophilia, or inflamed cuts.

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The spring of 2003 will linger in the minds of Chinese people for a long time, thanks to SARS. In the meantime, the epidemic has made national heroes out of the medical staff risking their lives to treat people with the disease and help contain it.



Zhong Nanshan

Director of the SARS Team of Guangdong Province, member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and head of the Guangzhou Center for Respiratory Diseases

For years a leading Chinese specialist in respiratory diseases, Zhong was well known among his peers, but the outbreak of SARS has turned him into a household name across the country.

He received a message from the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Public Health on January 21 2003, summoning him to look into a kind of "strange disease" at a hospital in Zhongshan.

The research team worked day and night for several days. They discovered that the disease, which had symptoms different to those of typical pneumonia, was a kind of infectious disease that had never appeared before. The research team sent a report on diagnosis, treatment and prevention measures of this disease to the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Public Health.

"The patient's lungs were as hard as plastic, which is unseen in regular pneumonia or even cases related to symptoms of other unidentified pneumonia," Zhong recalled. The usual treatment with antibiotics also had no effect and it was only after the patient was given intravenous injections of corticosteroid (steroid hormone produced by the cortex of the adrenal glands) that his condition began to respond."

The local government officially declared the outbreak of atypical pneumonia, later described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), in Guangdong Province at a conference in early February. Zhong was appointed director of the SARS Team of Guangdong Province, which comprises a number of senior specialists on respiratory tract diseases.

SARS hit the provincial capital city Guangzhou before the Spring Festival. Soon after, Zhong sent a message to hospitals around the city: "send the most serious patients to my center."

The Centre for Respiratory Diseases, of which he is director, admitted patients who were in the worst condition. Zhong not only saw new patients brought in each day, but also noticed, to his dismay, that his colleagues were becoming infected whilst treating the patients. Fourteen doctors and nurses at the center were infected with SARS, despite the careful preventive measures that had been taken.

The center had received 101 SARS patients by April 19. Zhong inspected and diagnosed every one of the patients.

In the afternoon of February 18, three days after the Lantern Festival, Zhong got a high fever at work. The strenuous rescue work had worn him out. He knew that he couldn't leave the job at such a crucial time. But he went back home that night and treated himself at home before returning to work the following day.

His medical knowledge and first hand experience makes him well aware of the danger posed by SARS. Throughout, he has refused to compromise his professional integrity by concealing the facts or by making misleading remarks about the disease.

Zhong arrived at a treatment for SARS patients involving a high dose of corticosteroid, together with traditional Chinese medicine, which has proved to be quite effective. 87 patients out of the 101 patients were cured and left the hospital by April 19 and Zhong claimed then that the number of SARS cases had started to decline in Guangdong.

Zhong says he does not know how long it will take for a vaccine to be produced, but he will continue to fight the disease with all available resources until an effective treatment is found. "It is what I specialize in," he said. "I want to know its cause, its pathogen and how to cure it. This is the biggest drive for me."



Photo by Xin Lai

In the Front Line



Lin Jinyan

Director of SARS Pathogen Testing Team of Guangdong Province, deputy director of Guangdong Provincial Center of Disease Prevention and Control

From last November, SARS cases began to occur and spread in Guangdong Province. A number of medical staff were infected while treating their patients.

On January 15 2003, atypical pneumonia cases emerged in a hospital in Zhongshan, infecting some doctors and nurses. Their severe condition was reported to Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Public Health. The hospital asked for help from the Chinese Center of Disease Prevention and Control.

On January 21, Lin Jinyan set out for Zhongshan with a group of other specialists. They worked out a report on the pneumonia cases later described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). After that, Lin paid another two investigation visits to Zhongshan for research on this disease.

The disease spread in Guangzhou during Spring Festival holiday. Lin briefed government leaders and specialists at an urgent meeting, and was assigned to write a detailed notice about SARS for related institutions. This notice played a significant role in curbing the rapid spread of the disease in Guangdong Province.

Later on, Lin was assigned the task of finding the pathogen of SARS. He and his team collected blood serum and phlegm specimens from 724 patients and started the challenging research.

When SARS cases peaked in Guangdong in late February, researchers at the Chinese Center for Disease Prevention and Control announced they had detected the pathogen of SARS and identified it as a new type of chlamydia. This discovery was quickly made public by the media and reported to the WHO.

But Lin and other doctors in Guangdong questioned the finding. With their rich clinical experience of the disease, they believed SARS was much more likely to be caused by an unknown virus. The family of bacteria called chlamydia can be contained by antibiotics, yet antibiotics had proved ineffectual against SARS. Lin and his colleagues warned any treatment based on such a conclusion could have seriously adverse consequences.

The doubts of Lin and his colleagues proved well-founded when, early in April, several laboratories across the world, working together, succeeded in pinpointing the SARS pathogen to a new coronavirus. The WHO announced on April 16 that the coronavirus is responsible for causing the typical symptoms of SARS. With the SARS virus properly identified, attention can be focused on developing appropriate diagnostic measures, treatment and a vaccine.

Lin and his colleagues also isolated the coronavirus from specimens taken from SARS patients two days later on April 18.



Li Xingwang

Director of Infection department, Ditan Hospital

Li is the leading SARS-examination doctor in the hospital. He's involved in most aspects of the job, including nurse training and examination of SARS patients. With the number of infected increasing, whether it's his shift or not, Li must be constantly available to visit and help patients.

In the beginning of the SARS outbreak, it was normal for patients to be transferred continually. Because their condition changed very fast, Li had little rest. During the first week he was getting three hours sleep per night.

On the basis of his more than twenty-years experience of infection treatment, plus his observation of SARS patients, Li helped build a standard for dividing SARS into different stages and levels, as well as various treatment plans.

A week after the hospital began to treat SARS patients, two nurses got infected. Li, together with the head nurse, immediately started to find a method of separating the ill and the healthy and sterilizing infected places.

In 1991, Ditan hospital received the first Chinese AIDS patient. Li kept telling medical workers not to be fearful. He was the first person who refused to wear a gauze mask and gloves when checking AIDS sufferers. It was a vital contribution to combating the fear of this new and mysterious disease felt by many of his colleagues.



Jia Shuangping

Head of quality control in the department of nursing, Ditan Hospital

In March, SARS cases appeared in Beijing. On the 26th, Ditan Hospital was designated as a unit to deal with the disease by the Ministry of Health and it began to receive patients that afternoon. The hospital formed a special SARS division and Jia Shuangpin was called into the front line.

That evening, two more SARS patients arrived. As other nurses were leaving wearily at the end of their shifts, Jia stayed, as she thought she should do some further checks.

Death still came. It was the first time many of the staff had come face to face with death. Despite desperate treatment efforts by the staff under the constant risk of infection themselves, the patient could not be saved. A lot of tears were shed that night, Jia said. "People who have SARS cannot have their family around them, even when they slip into another world. At this moment, all we can do is to be their family, and accompany them at the end."

With the help of other nurses, Jia cleaned up the patients, combed their hair and tidied their clothes. "We should keep the dignity for the patients."

On the third day after the hospital began receiving SARS cases, Jia's father had to be taken to Beijing Hospital. Before, when he had fallen ill, Jia was always by his side. But on this day, Jia was only able to see him briefly. She hasn't been able to return to see him since.



Liu Rongyu

Head nurse of Emergency department, China-Japan Friendship Hospital

Emergency departments are normally orderly places, but facing the sudden onset of SARS and such large scale demand for care, a certain amount of anxiety and confusion spread among many of the young nurses. At the beginning, some of them even forgot to wear necessary protective clothing when dealing with SARS patients, such as shoe-covers and gloves. So Liu took on the responsibility of checking this. Partly thanks to Liu, none of the nurses in the emergency department have got SARS yet.

Liu said that she felt a responsibility to the nurses' families, and the best way to honor it is to make sure the nurses can return home safe and sound.

During working hours, Liu is as busy as others. At break time, she becomes a good talker and listener. The conversation covers work as well as families. Nurses can't go home while involved in treating people with SARS, so a lot of them look to their head nurse for reassurance and support. A few minutes talk can make them feel calm for a whole day.

The word Liu uses most often when talking with nurses is "optimism". She says worry and depression will not help anything; on the contrary, it will lower people's immunity.

Translated by Zhao Pu / Yu Shanshan

Who Killed Sun?

Sun Zhigang, 27, a college graduate, came to Guangzhou in late February this year to work at a clothes-making company as a designer. On March 17, he was arrested because he failed to produce his identification card. He died three days later. An autopsy conducted a month later showed he had been severely beaten a couple of days before his death.

In his last three days, Sun spent a night at Guangzhou Huangcun-jie Police Station, before being taken to Guangzhou Collecting Post (an asylum-like organization which houses people to be sent back to their hometown) and then to the Health Care Center of Guangzhou Collecting Post.

Who beat Sun to death? Unnamed sources from the local court and procuratorate suggested the police officers might have used violence during their interrogation of the young man.

After *Southern Metropolitan Daily*, a Guangzhou based newspaper, reported the story late last month, Guangzhou Public Security Bureau organized a special work group to look into this case.

Arrest, custody, death

Sun graduated from Wuhan Science and Technology College in Hubei Province in 2001. He had worked at a company in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province before coming to work in Guangzhou.

At about 10 pm on March 17, Sun was on his way to an Internet cafe. One hour later, a Mr. Cheng who lived with Sun received a call from Sun who said he had been taken to Huangcun-jie Police Station as he had no temporary resident permit.

Since Sun was a newcomer to Guangzhou, he had not taken time to obtain a temporary resident permit issued by the police. Nor had he taken his identification card with him that night.

Over the phone, Sun asked Cheng to "brink money and my ID card" to bail him out. When Cheng and one of his colleagues came to the police station, it was about midnight.

However, Cheng was told by the police, "Sun can not be bailed out even if he has an ID card."

Cheng spoke to Sun briefly at the station. When he asked how he was caught and whether he was cooperative with the police, Sun said he had done nothing. "Sun admitted he talked back to the police but he didn't think he had said anything too bad," said Cheng. That was the last time Cheng saw him alive.

The next day, a friend of Sun, who asked not to be named, received a call from Sun from the Guangzhou Collecting Post. "He stammered and spoke quickly. It sounded like he was terrified," said the friend. Sun asked the friend to get his boss at the clothes-making company to bail him out at the collecting post. When the boss managed to put together all the required documents and went to the post, it was about to close. He was told to come back the next day.

On March 19, Sun's friend called the post and learned Sun had been transferred to the Health Care Center of Guangzhou Collecting Post.

The medical record shows Sun was admitted to the hospital at 11:30 pm, March 18.

Cheng said they went to the hospital on March 19 to visit Sun but the doctor told them only Sun's relatives could visit him.

At noon on March 20, when Sun's friend called the hospital again for more information, he was told Sun had died.

According to Sun's medical record, he died at 10:25, March 20, 2003.

How did he die?

The hospital said Sun died of a heart attack. But Sun's father said his son had had no history of heart disease. Moreover, the autopsy result issued by Zhongshan Medical School of Zhongshan University on April 18 showed that Sun had suffered a severe beating at some point in then 72 hours prior to his death.

No clear injury marks could be seen on Sun's body. However,

the forensic doctor found evidence of massive internal injury. "They found a number of big blood clots," said Sun Bingwu, Sun Zhigang's uncle who witnessed the autopsy. "It was horrible."

Sun Bingwu said he saw two black circular marks 1.5 cm in diameter on each of Sun Zhigang's shoulders. Also, five or six such black marks were on Sun's knees. They indicated Sun had been scalded or burned by fire.

It wasn't us

The local Civil Administration believes staff at the collecting post couldn't have beaten Sun. The police station denied they beat him.



Sun Zhigang's self-portrait

The hospital also denied that Sun's injuries had been caused during his stay at the hospital.

Xie Zhitang, director of the Civil Affairs Division of Guangzhou Civil Administration, told *Southern Metropolitan Daily* that he knew about Sun's case. "All the staff at the collecting post are civil servants. They would be fired if they beat anybody. And surveillance videos are installed at the post," said Xie. He said he had no idea why Sun was beaten. But he is sure Sun was not beaten at the collecting post. As soon as they found Sun was ill, they sent him to the hospital right away.

The Huangcun-jie Police Station refused to accept any interviews. But according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* report, a few leaders from Guangzhou Public Security Bureau and Guangzhou Civil Administration paid a visit to Sun's relatives on April 26, saying they would give Sun's family a satisfactory explanation and that they hoped the family wouldn't appeal to higher authorities. The next day, Sun's relatives received 2,000 yuan from Guangzhou Tianhe District Public Security Bureau as condolence but the family refused to accept it.

According to the report, an unnamed person from the police said their own investigation of this case found Sun's beating had nothing to do with the police. "Sun might have been beaten by the eight people who shared the same room with him at the hospital," he said. "And the people were from eight different provinces and they've all left Guangzhou."

As for the hospital, an unnamed official at the Guangzhou Brain Hospital denied the police's accusation. He said Sun's injury couldn't have been caused at the hospital because staff are posted at the hospital to monitor the patients through video and monitoring systems. Any trouble would have been stopped.

Hu Shibo, a lawyer from Guangdong Datong Law Firm who offered to provide free legal assistance to Sun's relatives, said there was little chance that Sun was beaten by other patients in the hospital for the following reasons:

1. Sun died of severe internal injury and no external injury was obvious; this indicates it must have been a fairly professional beating.

2. Sun must have been beaten for a long time and he would probably have shouted for help. Why would the hospital staff not have heard anything?

3. Why would the eight patients who all came from outside Guangdong want to beat Sun?

4. There was evidence that Sun had been tortured during the beating. Where would the eight patients have acquired the tools to do this?

What's the law?

Taking Sun to the collecting post does not comply with the state's relevant regulations. Also, it seems there were not adequate reasons to arrest Sun or for him to be sent home, according to the local regulations.

In the Guangdong Housing and Repatriation Management Regulation implemented on April 1, 2002, only those who "are wanderers or beggars or who have no source of living" should be taken in and sent home.

The regulation also states that those "who have legal certificates, normal residence, proper livelihood, but who do not take identification papers with them can not be taken in by the collecting post so long as a sufficient explanation is provided and found to be true."

In Sun's case, he had a job and thus "a proper livelihood". He lived at a friend's home and thus had "normal residence". He had an identification card, so he had a "legal certificate."

What Sun did not have was a temporary residence permit. But those who do not have such a permit still cannot be taken in, according to the Legal Affairs Office of Guangdong People's Congress.

However, in the form filled out by Sun at Huangcun-jie Police Station, it was indicated that Sun "has no residence, no source of living and no valid certificate."

Sun's death was a terrible blow to his family and friends. In their eyes, Sun was a nice guy, talented but stubborn. He grew up in a poor family in Huanggang, Wuhan Province and was the first college student from his hometown.

Sun's body has not yet been cremated and the case is still open.

Edited by Ivy Zhang

Sources: *Southern Metropolitan Daily*, *Beijing Youth Daily*, *Beijing Evening News*



The father, Sun Liulong

Photo by De Sheng

Cops Rapped for Cuffing Kid

Three heads of Dukang Police Station in Shaanxi Province were punished last week following the arrest of an innocent girl last month.

On April 12, four policemen from Dukang Police Station went

"Nowadays, how many people in our society have this kind of courage and awareness? The girl was also very smart. She didn't agree to have her handcuffs taken off until she reported the case to a higher public security bureau and the media."

— South City Daily, a local newspaper in Guangzhou, issued a comment on April 17 praising Ma's courage and her awareness of law.

to a house in Hanjing village, Pucheng County. They wanted Ma Mingliang, the boss of a small private garage, to come with them to answer some questions.

Ma's 15-year-old daughter Ma Fei (pseudonym), a middle school student, asked the police what they wanted and asked them to show their identity.

"They refused and said 'little girl, this is nothing to do with you. Get away.' I tried to prevent them from taking away my father, but they kicked me and beat me on the head," said Ma.

Ma and her father were then handcuffed and dragged out to the police car outside the house.

"One of them even pulled me to the car by my hair," added Ma.

An angry crowd of around 200 villagers rapidly gathered around the police car. One of the policemen called for reinforce-

ments with his cell phone and another police car soon arrived.

The villagers demanded that they show their credentials, so the policemen who had just arrived showed their cards which said they were from Baishui County Public Security Bureau (which is higher than Dukang Police Station).

Seeing the police were distracted, Ma took her chance and escaped from the car. The police then left, taking Ma's father away.

The next day, accompanied by her relatives, Ma went to see Weinan Municipal Public Security Bureau, Weinan Municipal Government and *Huashang Daily* in Weinan to report her case. *Huashang Daily* is an influential local newspaper in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi Province. Ma was still handcuffed

Learning that Ma and her rel-

atives had been to Weinan, Tian Xiaoping, the head of the supervision group of Baishui County Public Security Bureau hurriedly took three subordinates to Weinan the same day.

Tian told Ma, who was at Weinan Public Security Bureau, on the phone that he wanted to meet with her at once in order to release her from her handcuffs. Ma refused.

"But after being persuaded by Weinan police, Ma agreed. Her handcuffs were taken off on April 14 and she returned to her home. Shaanxi Province Public Security Bureau asked Weinan Municipal Public Security Bureau to establish a group to investigate the case yesterday. The group has arrived in Baishui County," said *Huashang Daily* on April 15.

Tian Xiaoping from Baishui County Public Security Bureau denied that his subordinates at Dukang Police Station had beaten Ma. He insisted that the policemen had showed their identification to Ma and her father.

A *Huashang Daily* reporter asked Tian why the policemen handcuffed Ma. Tian didn't answer the question directly and just said, "We didn't know she was only 15 years old. Anyway, we'll take the matter seriously."

After the investigation, the group sent by Weinan Municipal Public Security Bureau said that Dukang Police Station should be held responsible for its inappropriate behavior.

Last week, Baishui Public Security Bureau announced a decision to remove Li Anlong, the political instructor of Dukang Police Station, from his position. Zhang Xinmin, the director of the bureau, and Ren Hongjun, vice-director of the Dukang Police Station, received disciplinary warnings.

Edited by Sun Ming
Sources: *Huashang Daily*
South City Daily



Photo by Liu Yang

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Art Replaces Industry

Former state factory transforming into modern art center

By Iris Miao

It all started when a few young artists were looking for roomy and affordable studio space, preferably somewhere outside the hustle and bustle of downtown. They found an abandoned factory area that offered vast, vacant warehouses, ideal cheap spots to set up workshops. In time, the spaces became known as lofts.

Artists moved in, and began refashioning the lofts into studio, showrooms and living space. Soon their idea turned into a veritable movement. Galleries came first, and then restaurants, bars and boutiques swarmed into the area. Within just a couple decades of those artists' discovery, the land had some of the highest property values in the city, to the point that nearly no young artists could afford to rent or work in the fabled lofts.

That is the story of the 1950's reincarnation of New York's SoHo (South of Houston Street) area, which has cemented a place in the ranks of modern art history.

Since early 2002, history has seemed to be repeating itself, more locally. Young artists with similar dreams have taken over and are redoing a former electronics factory at 2 Jiuxianqiao Road in Dashanzi in the northeast of the city. Only time will tell whether it proves to be as successful as its spiritual predecessor.

Factory 798 is an abandoned relic of the state-run factory model, first built in the 1950s under the aid of the Soviets, its design and construction overseen by a team of East German experts. True to the German style, the building is plain, simple and functional.

In ways the original designers could never have guessed, the space is perfect for artistic use. Now that the massive machines inside have been removed, the factory has become a series of huge workshops with over-seven-meter high ceilings, serpentine ducts and great light. Slogans on the walls like "Long Live Chairman Mao" that survived the vicissitudes of the past half-century are deliberately being preserved, adding a sense of time and mild irony to the newly decorated Bauhaus-style halls.

So far, 22 organizations and 24 studios involving 32 individual artists have opened public

spaces in 798. Aside from galleries, the innovative area is home to clubs, cafes, an art bookstore, restaurants, purveyors of household goods, and fashion designers, photographers, publishers, performers and interior designers.

That the area was prime for leasing passed completely by word of mouth, according to Robert Bernell, owner of Timezone 8 Art Books, the first business to move into 798 last February. Bernell graduated from Stanford University and has been living in Beijing for eight years. Timezone 8 used to be a website that specialized in trade of modern Chinese art, but in the wake of the bust of the Internet industry, he has changed the focus of the company to art books. The bookstore stands out with its red brick walls, all part of a careful design by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei.

The largest hall in the remodeled factory belongs to the gallery 798 Space, covering an area of 1,200 square meters. Owner Xu Yong is a photographer and uses the space not only for exhibitions of contemporary art, but also to host cultural and commercial exchange activities.

The designer of 798 Space is Huang Rui, who, with his Japanese wife, runs the Private Space studio. At the same time, they host activities related to Beijing Tokyo Art Project, established by Yukihoto Tabata, one of the owners of the Tokyo Gallery in Japan.

Other spaces currently in use include the simply named Sit, a combination gallery and French restaurant owned by Shao Fan, and the 25000 Cultural Transmission Center. The center was established by curator Lu Jie not only for use as a studio, but also as a site for curatorial experimentation. Right now, it is the creative base for *The Long March - A Walking Visual Display*, an exhibition of objects, books and materials in both Chinese and English and documentary film footage all related to the famed Long March of the Red Army in the late 1930's.

Huang Rui said that the idea for 798 is to become a gathering point for energetic, creative, and courageous artists. In his mind, the space could mix art with modern lifestyles, becoming something far beyond the artists' villages near Yuanmingyuan and



798 Photo Gallery

Songzhuang that are more focused on rustic simplicity.

For now, space in 798 can only be leased for periods up to two years, and there are rumors the former factory is slated for demolition in 2005. Xu Yong said that, the atmosphere and space in the place are so attractive that thoughts of the future are not troubling.

That seems to be a shared sentiment, as prices in 798 have been rising steadily. Last year the price for 100 square meters was 20,000 to 30,000 yuan. However, the high ceilings make it very possible to divide spaces into two floors, thereby cutting actual cost of space. The low cost of that rent can be put in perspective by the fact that typical interior renovation costs 40,000 yuan to 60,000 yuan for a 100 square meter space.

Unfortunately for some artists, 798 is threatening to completely follow in the footsteps of SoHo, as rent has surged this year to the point that many young artists cannot afford space.

Photos by Wang Wei



Sit gallery and restaurant



Painter Li Songsong at his studio

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BEIJING TODAY
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Blue Vigor at Moli Dianzi

By James Liu
As summer seems to happen every year, spring has quickly made way to summer, and the heat has arrived. Just a few weeks after most people were still in their long johns and sweaters, it is skirt and t-shirt time.

Of course, even the sweltering sun has a rosy side – hot weather necessitates finding ways to keep cool, one of the most pleasurable being ice cream and other frozen treats. There are plenty of name brands on the market, but why limit oneself to predictable confections. *Beijing Today* has scoured the city to find shops selling tasty smoothies and other items that are fresh, cooling and remarkably healthy.

The Country's Best Yogurt (TCBY)

This US brand, with over 4,000 locations worldwide, entered the Beijing market two years ago and has opened two shops. As the name gives away, TCBY specializes in frozen yogurt, which has two major advantages over regular ice cream. One, it does not include lactic acid, meaning it is easy to take for those who are lactose intolerant, and it is far lower in fat and calories, with 100 grams of frozen yogurt containing only three

Tasty Ways to Chill

Average cost: 50 yuan per person
Moli Dianzi Café

This café has been serving Taiwan-style soft drinks and ice products since 2002. More recently it moved from its first location in Dongdan to Jiaodaokou near the Drum Tower.

Drinkable treats are the joint's top items. A range of frappes, ice mixed with French-made Monin syrups in flavors including strawberry and papaya, go for 15 yuan to 18 yuan each. Other concoctions have funny names such as 520, a homonym for "I love you" in Chinese, which goes for 22 yuan, and the Fool Two (*shagua erhao*, 12 yuan), made from syrup, ice-cream, and ice.

Must-tries are the milk shakes, all priced at 18 yuan and made with just pure milk and syrup, no ice. Try the peppermint milk shake when serious refreshment is needed. Due to the slack market these days, the shop is offering one kind of coffee at half price everyday to try to draw more customers.

Add: 318 Andingmennei Dajie, Dongcheng **Open:** 6:30-3 am **Tel:** 8402 2984 **Average cost:** 25 yuan per person



Frozen yogurt at TCBY



Eternal Beauty (33 yuan) at Fruity Mix

grams of fat and 134 calories.

The frozen treat comes in hard scoop and soft serve versions, both with a range of flavors such as chocolate and papaya. Regardless of choice, the yogurts are not too sweet, with soft, pleasant tastes. Prices range by size, with small scoops going for 18 yuan and triple scoops for 35 yuan, while the mini soft serve fetches 18 yuan and the large 25. Customers can also order from a selection of toppings, priced at 3 yuan each, including chocolate chips and fresh fruit.

The stores offer a range of juices, coffee and sodas to wash down the frozen yogurt. Another specialty is the low-fat, low-calorie and low-cholesterol Yog-A-Cake, a delicious confection that sells for 150 yuan per pound.

Add: AA01, Oriental Plaza, 1 East Chang'an Avenue, Dongcheng **Tel:** 8518 6169; No.11 Zhongguancun Nan Street **Tel:** 68432287 **Open:** 9 am – 11 pm **Average cost:** 40 yuan per person



TCBY at Oriental Plaza

Recipes to Keep SARS at Bay

By James Liu

While scientists are still undecided on the best means to prevent SARS, traditional Chinese medicine experts have some suggestions that are as easy as eating the right foods. They recommend light, fresh foods instead of hot and spicy dishes, and eating lots of fruit like oranges and pears that are good for the lungs. Other ingredients to try include bitter melon (*kugua*), kelp and small dried shrimp.

The following two recipes incorporate these materials in dishes that taste and look fresh and may help keep SARS at bay.

Kelp and mung bean soup

Ingredients: 20 grams kelp; 20 grams mung beans; 10 grams almond; 8 grams rose bulb; sugar to taste

Procedure: Soak the almond in hot water for 20 minutes and then remove skin. Put rose bulbs in cheesecloth or gauze bag. Shred the kelp, then boil it with the almonds, rose bulbs and mung beans for one hour. Remove the rose bulbs, add sugar and serve.

Braised spare ribs and bitter melon

Ingredients: 400 grams spare ribs; 200 grams bitter melon; 10 grams ginger; 5 grams scallion; 2 tsp salt

Procedure: Bring a pot of water to boil, then add shredded scallion and ginger. Add spare ribs and cook 20 minutes. Add bitter melon, cook another 15 minutes. Add salt and serve.



Ice cream in fruit containers at Fruity Mix

Fuzion Smoothie Café

One month after this joint officially opening on March 21, *Beijing Business Today* hailed it as the herald of the rise of "smoothie culture" in the capital. That might be a bit of an exaggeration for this small outlet of a Singaporean chain, but it definitely serves up some delicious, cooling concoctions.

Owner Karen Hao worked in a law office before deciding to launch the smoothie outlet. "I fell in love with smoothies on trips abroad, but couldn't find a real smoothie shop in Beijing, so I decided to open one," she told *Beijing Today*.

All the shop's smoothies are made from freshly blended fruit and contain no ice, no added sugar and no artificial ingredients. Before going into the blender, all fruits used are flash frozen, which allows them make cooling drinks while retaining their full nutrient and fiber content.

Fuzion Café serves 27 kinds of smoothies, along with sandwiches, pita pockets, and tea. Smoothies go for 15 yuan to 30 yuan depending on flavor and size. A perfect accompaniment is the house special Wardolf salad, made with apples, raisins, and cheese (22 yuan).

Add: CC15, underground of Oriental Plaza, 1 East Chang'an Avenue, Dongcheng **Open:** 10 am – 10 pm **Tel:** 8518 6369



Fruity mix

Fruity mix

The name betrays the theme to this establishment – fruit. House specials are foods the contain fresh fruit, such as sandwiches with apple or banana, ice cream and fruity yogurt. While the idea itself might not sound that remarkable, the treats here are quite tasty and come in combinations that few people would think of at home.

The stars of the menu are the fruit mixes, such as Mango Secret (26 yuan), Coconut Secret (24 yuan), and Fruity Supreme (26 yuan), which look beautiful and taste great. Also offered is an unconventional take on a lunch time staple, the tuna fruit sandwich (14 yuan).

A new addition to the menu is a mixture papaya, apricot, aloe and sago in a glass bowl (*zhongshen meili*, 33 yuan), pitched as being able to help women maintain their beauty.

Add: CC02, underground Oriental Plaza, 1 East Chang'an Avenue, Dongcheng **Open:** 8:30 am – 10 pm **Tel:** 8518 6259 **Average cost:** 20 yuan per person



Frozen Smoothie Café

Cooking Chinese at Home

Asian Slaw

This slaw tastes great with grilled teriyaki chicken or beef.

INGREDIENTS

4 cups shredded green cabbage
3/4 cup diagonally sliced green onions
1/2 cup shredded carrot
1/2 cup thinly sliced red bell pepper
2 tablespoons low-sodium tamari or soy sauce
1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted
1 tablespoon grated peeled fresh ginger
1 tablespoon mirin (Japanese sweet rice wine)
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1-1/2 teaspoons dark sesame oil
2 teaspoons sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Let stand at least 15 minutes before serving.

YIELD

8 servings
(serving size: 1/2 cup)

NUTRITIONAL INFO

Calories: 34
Carbohydrates: 4.1 g
Cholesterol: 0 mg
Fat: 1.6 g
Sodium: 125 mg
Protein: 1 g
Calcium: 58 mg
Iron: 0.7 mg
Fiber: 1 g



Bifengtang crab (L) and youya baozaifan

Photos by Zhuang Jian

Puppets Restaurant

By James Liu

Since opening on April 9, this two-storey restaurant located just behind Wangfujing has been drawing customers with its attractive wood facade and kept them coming back with a tasty range of local Cantonese and Macao style food and beverages.

While Puppets faces some stiff competition in the local Cantonese food market, going up against such institutions as the ever-popular Be There or Be Square chain, it does have some dishes offered nowhere else in this city. One of this eatery's strong suits are a range of clay

pot dishes, such as braised eel and dried bean curd in clay pot (*zhizhu huangshan bao*, 28 yuan), which are delicious and large enough to comfortably serve three.

Another specialty of the house is seafood prepared *bifengtang* style, meaning fried in a crisp, fragrant mixture of bread crumbs and garlic, a southern favorite. Dishes in this range are priced very reasonably at 20 to 60 yuan.

Recent additions to the menu are a selection of rice cooked in clay pot, large enough to serve four to six diners, with air-dried pork and spare ribs rice (*lawei paigu baozai-*

fan, 25 yuan) proving the most popular, according to owner Vic Lau. Just be prepared to wait, because these dishes take around 30 minutes to prepare.

The drink selection includes Hong Kong favorites such as *naicha* (milk tea), generally cheaper than at local competitors. Puppets also offers set meals at 18 yuan each, making it a great place for lunch or a quick bite. One of the few drawbacks is the lack of a parking lot.

Add: 7 Meishuguan Dongjie, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am – 10 pm **Tel:** 8403 8894 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person



Photos by Xinhua

Niu Jie Mosque in the Muslim Quarter

By Zhang Bo

The Muslim Quarter in Beijing is populated mainly by Chinese of the Hui nationality. There are three mosques in the district, the most famous being the Niu Jie Mosque at 88 Niu Jie, Xuanwu District.

Originally built in 996 by Nazruddin, the son of an imam, the mosque was undistinguished when the armies of the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) captured Beijing and the city became known as Zhongdu. Zhongdu was razed by Ghengis Khan's forces in 1215.

Definitive records of the mosque start with the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) when this location was to the southwest of the then city wall. Beijing at that time was known as Dadu, or Great Capital.

After a major expansion in 1442 during the Ming Dynasty, the mosque became known simply as Libai Si (礼拜寺). There are two general terms for mosque in Chinese; Qingzhen Si, meaning temple of purity, and Libai Si, which translates as temple of worship.

In recent years, the mosque has undergone several renovations. In 1996, the 1,000th anniversary of the founding of the Niu Jie Mosque, the local government founded a major renovation.

A cultural relic listed for special protection by the central government, Niu Jie Mosque is the oldest and largest mosque in Beijing and is a distinctive combination of Chinese architectural forms serving Islamic religious functions. Dating from the Liao, Yuan, Ming and Qing eras, the various structures are arranged symmetrically and harmoniously.

Stepping into the mosque, visitors first see a 30-meter-long screen wall facing the gate. The special feature of the wall is a stone carving on the central section made of white marble with propitious clouds on the top and *ruyi* (an S-shaped ornamental object, formerly a symbol of good

luck) on its base. In the middle section it depicts a bell on a tree, a chessboard under the bell and an incense burner by the chessboard. Unlike Chinese temples of other religions, there are no depictions of human figures, in accordance with Islamic custom.

Behind the screen wall stands the front gate of the mosque, open only during the Festival of Fast-Breaking (开斋节) and Corban (古尔邦节). A golden plaque hangs on top of the gate, which reads Datian Junlu (Road Leading to Heaven). Inside, visitors can see Wangyue Lou (望月楼), or Tower for Viewing the Moon, a hexagonal minaret with a two-story cornice. At the top is an attic covered with glazed green tiles. Every year, when Ramadan (the month of fasting) is pending, the imams look for the crescent moon from this tower, in order to ascertain the correct beginning and end to Ramadan.

Along the corridor to the second section of the complex lies the most important part of the mosque, the Hall of Worship, which faces the direction of Mecca, the holy city of Islam. The hall has five principle columns and is divided into three sections, which can accommodate 1,000 worshippers. Arches in the hall follow an Arabian architectural style. Huge columns engraved with golden lotus and red floor board covered with white felt unite to create an effect of exceptional richness and sanctity.

Outside the Hall of Worship, there are two steles from the Liao and Yuan dynasties proclaiming imperial patronage and protection of the mosque. The steles also record the historic evolution of the mosque, but the indistinct writing on them is difficult to make out.

Two schoolrooms are located on the north and south of the Hall of Worship. To the east of the hall, stands Bangke Lou (邦克楼), a two-story building, from which the iman summons the faithful to prayer. Opposite this building



Niu Jie snack



Green root riles

is another hall, in which a collection of ancient porcelain and classical Islamic texts are preserved.

Also in the southeast part of the second section is a courtyard with two tombs, belonging to two Islamic sages who came to China to preach in the 13th century and died in the mosque. Written in Arabic, epitaphs on the tombs eulogize the achievements of the two sages.

There is also an inscription by Qing Dynasty Emperor Kangxi on another stele in the mosque, which records the emperor's vindication to the false accusation that the Hui nationality in Beijing conspired in the mosque to launch a rebellion during his reign.

After a massive redevelopment at the end of 2000, the Muslim Quarter near the mosque has been transformed. Most of the

maze of hutongs and siheyuan are gone, replaced by a broad straight avenue lined with multistory residential and commercial blocks dominating the nearby landscape.

Prior to redevelopment, the area was dotted with many excellent small restaurants specializing in beef and mutton dishes. Now these restaurants have moved to the streets and hutongs nearby.

Fayuan Temple, the oldest Buddhist temple in downtown Beijing, is about 10 minutes' walk east of Niu Jie.

Hours: 8 am - 4 pm

Admission: 10 yuan

Tip: Friday is the Muslim sabbath, so do not visit the mosque on this day unless you plan to pray. Visitors should dress appropriately, people wearing shorts or revealing too much skin will be refused admittance.

MUSEUM WATCH

By Guo Yuandan

The China Geology Museum opened in 1959, established from the Geological and Mineral Products Exhibition Hall of the Geological Investigation Office founded in 1916. It is the largest and oldest geological museum in China.

Over 12,000 geological specimens from China and overseas are collected in the museum. Many of them are precious, such as the giant Shandong dinosaur fossil; stoneware, bone needles and bone decorations unearthed from the Shandingdong site at Zhoukoudian near Beijing. There are fossilized human teeth from Yuanmou, Yunnan, and primitive bird fossils found in the west of Liaoning Province.

The museum comprises of five exhibition halls, in which can be found a variety of geological resources, including mineral rocks, crystals and fossilized insects, fish and eggs.

In the Diamond Hall there are specimens of diamond, jade, colored stone and ink slab stone.

Where: 15 Xisi Yangrou Hutong, Xicheng
Hours: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Tel: 6617 6387

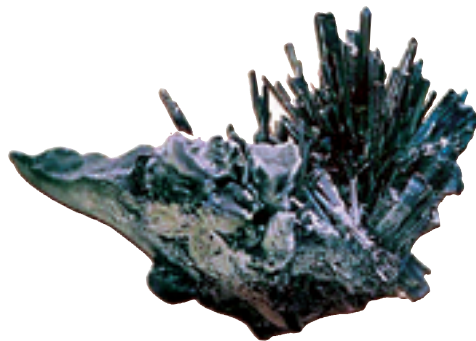
China Geology Museum



Bird fossil



Gypsum crystal



Splendor crystal

WALL WALKS

Niangzi Pass

By Lisa Huang

Niangzi Pass (娘子关), 45 kilometers north of Pingding (平顶), Shanxi Province, straddles a key route between Hebei and Shanxi. Surrounded by a maze of hills and valleys, Niangzi Pass was once famed as "the Ninth Pass on the Great Wall."

The fort was constructed on the mountainside, leaning against steep cliffs and overlooking the sheer valley. The Great Wall snakes along the ridges of the Taihang Mountains creating a solid barrier between the two sides.

Niangzi Pass means "Women's Pass," and there is a well-known legend behind the name. In 617 the future founder of the Tang dynasty, Li Yuan led an uprising against the ruling Sui Dynasty in Shanxi Province. Li's daughter joined her father in the revolt, recruiting female soldiers in Huxian,

Shaanxi province.

With a force of over 70,000 women, the army under the command of the daughter helped take the Sui capital of Chang'an. When Li Yuan established the Tang dynasty in the following year, he conferred the title of Princess Ping Yang upon his daughter. It is said the princess once garrisoned this pass, hence its name.

The structure that remains today was built in 1542, during the Ming Dynasty. The fort is a rectangular structure with brick gates at the east and west.

On the other side of the Tao River there is a stone beacon tower known as Dianjiang Tai (Call-up Platform), where the princess is said to have reviewed her troops and assigned orders.

Getting there: Take train K73 or 4405 from Beijing West Railway Station to Yangquan (阳泉), then bus to Niangzi Pass.



Niangzi Pass